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It's time to open doors for SIR

SIR begins in Karnataka on Wednesday; 5.54 crore voters, spread across 34 electoral districts in the state, will be verified for electoral roll revision; the exercise is being carried out after a 24-year-gap.

BENGALURU

The Election Commission (EC) on Tuesday began the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Karnataka, deploying around 59,000 Booth Level Officers (BLOs) for a month-long door-to-door exercise, even as the ruling Congress raised concerns over certain aspects of the process and sought clarifications from the poll panel.

'46.52 lakh electors remain unmapped'

Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) V Anbu Kumar said 59,050 BLOs would distribute enumeration forms and conduct house-to-house verification across the state until July 29.

He said the EC has so far mapped 5.07 crore electors, accounting for 91.61% of Karnataka's 5.54 crore voters, after comparing legacy and current electoral rolls. The remaining 46.53 lakh electors are yet to be mapped, with the exercise continuing.

Kumar clarified that voters would not be required to furnish any documents during the present phase of the revision. They only need to fill up the enumeration forms and submit them. In cases where an elector is unavailable, an adult member of the family may sign the form on the person's behalf, he added.

The draft electoral rolls will be published on August 5, after which claims and objections can be filed until September 9. The EC will dispose of all claims and objections by October 3 before publishing the final electoral rolls on October 7.

Min seeks clarity on 'logical discrepancies'

Ahead of the exercise, Home Minister Priyank Kharge said the Congress had sought clarification from the EC and the CEO on what he termed "logical discrepancies" in the revision process but had not received any response.

"We sought clarity on logical discrepancy, on the criteria to exempt people from the voter list. But there is no response," he said. While saying revision of electoral rolls was within the EC's mandate, he alleged that similar exercises carried out in Tamil Nadu, Kerala and West Bengal had deprived poor voters of their rights.

Industries Minister MB Patil also alleged that the BJP was attempting to use the revision exercise to remove voters supporting the Congress in 97 Assembly constituencies.

Parties educate voters

The Congress has constituted monitoring committees at the state, divisional and district levels to oversee the revision exercise and has conducted awareness programmes across Karnataka over the past few weeks. The BJP has also organised workshops for its workers in preparation for the electoral roll revision.

CM kicks off voter list revision drive

Bengaluru: Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Tuesday launched the SIR of electoral rolls by filling out the enumeration form at his residence in Sadashivanagar, formally marking the beginning of the campaign in the state. Bengaluru South Deputy Commissioner Yashwanth Gurukar was present on the occasion.

Irrespective of mapping, electors' names continue to be in the rolls based on the 2002 and 2025 data. Mapping will continue till the draft electoral roll is published on August 5, 2026.
-V Anbukkumar, Chief Electoral Officer, Karnataka

K'taka SIR Timeline

- **JUNE 30:** Doorstep enumeration begins.
- **JULY 29:** Enumeration ends.
- **AUGUST 5:** Draft electoral roll published.
- **AUG 5 TO SEPTEMBER 4:** Claims & objections.
- **TILL OCTOBER 3:** Disposal of claims & objections.
- **OCTOBER 7:** Final electoral roll to be published.

Voters & mapping overview

KARNATAKA

In **17** of the **34** electoral districts in the state, the percentage of voters mapped exceeded **95%**, the highest being Kodagu with **98.68%**.

- Electoral districts: **34**
- Total voters: **5,54,32,314**
- Voters mapped: **5.08 cr**
- Unmapped: **46.53 lakh**

BENGALURU

The 4 electoral districts of the Bengaluru Urban revenue district have the highest number of unmapped voters.

No. of unmapped voters

Bengaluru South dist	6.23 lakh
Bengaluru Central dist	4.92 lakh
Bengaluru North dist	5.79 lakh
Bengaluru Urban dist	7.65 lakh

Cong moves privilege notice against Rajnath

New Delhi: Senior Congress MP KC Venugopal on Tuesday submitted a breach of privilege notice against Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, accusing him of misleading Parliament on the military casualties during the Operation Sindoor.

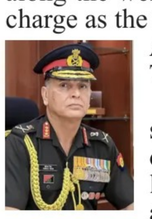
Venugopal, also the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) chairman, shot off a letter to Speaker Om Birla, claiming that Singh told the Lok Sabha on July 28 last year that no soldier was killed in the Operation Sindoor. However, he said, a recent statement showed the names of six personnel who died in the operation.

The position "clearly indicates that the Minister of Defence, while stating on the floor of the House that there had been no casualties during Op Sindoor, was clearly misleading or incorrect", he said.

"It is well established that misleading the House or withholding information from the House by a minister on the floor of the House constitutes a breach of privilege and contempt of the House," he said seeking initiation of breach of privilege proceedings against Singh.

Gen Seth takes charge as Army Chief

New Delhi: General Dhiraj Seth, an accomplished military officer with the rare distinction of heading two operational Army commands along the western front, took charge as the new Chief of the Army Staff on Tuesday.



Gen Seth assumed the reins of the 1.3 million-strong force at a time when it is forging a path to become a self-reliant and future-ready Army while meeting challenges on the borders.

The general officer succeeded General Upendra Dwivedi, who retired on Tuesday after an illustrious career spanning over 40 years in the armed forces. Gen Seth is an alumnus of the National Defence Academy (NDA), Khadakwasla. He was commissioned into the Armoured Corps in December 1986. Prior to becoming the 31st Chief of the Army Staff (COAS), he served as the Vice Chief of the Army Staff.

Gen Seth took over as the COAS at a time when the global geo-strategic environment remains dynamic, with challenges in the security domain becoming more pronounced due to technological advancements and the ever-changing character of modern warfare.

'We'll cut off hands that...': Pak min threatens India over Indus waters

ISLAMABAD

Less than a week after Pakistan's Defence Minister Khawaja Asif threatened India with military aggression over the Indus Waters Treaty, another Pakistani Minister has said they will "cut off those hands" that seek to claim Islamabad's share of water under the agreement.

The fresh threat came from Pakistan's Climate Change Minister Musadik Malik, adding more fuel to the tensions over the decades-old water-sharing pact that India decided to keep in abeyance following the 2025 Pahalgam terror attack, in which 26 people were killed.

Addressing a press conference, Malik alleged that India controlled Pakistan's share of water, claiming that they would not let anyone obstruct the water.

"There is a tap being controlled by the Prime Minister of a neighbouring country. He says he will not let even a drop of water flow into Pakistan," Malik said. He added that 40-50% of Pakistan's population depended on agriculture for survival. He claimed that Pakistan had "already declared that anyone trying to deprive it of its water would face severe consequences".

REBELLION IN THE RANKS

Leaked audio exposes cracks in saffron camp

Shyam Sundar Vattam, CH NEWS

The simmering discontent within the Karnataka unit of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has burst into the open, exposing deep cracks in the saffron camp and raising serious questions over the leadership of state BJP president BY Vijayendra and Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly R Ashoka.

What was once confined to hushed conversations behind closed doors has now become public discourse. The leaked audio clip, purportedly featuring a former Chief Minister and a senior BJP functionary discussing the need to remove Vijayendra from the state president's post, has sent shockwaves through the party and embarrassed the national leadership.

"This is no longer a whisper campaign. The rebellion has found a voice," remarked a senior BJP leader on condition of anonymity. "The leadership cannot pretend that everything is normal anymore."

Several leaders, particularly from the old guard, are said to be unhappy with the current power structure, arguing that both Vijayendra and Ashoka have failed to provide effective political direction. The party's inability to win a single Assembly by-election under the present leadership and the recent cross-voting by BJP legislators in the biennial Legislative Council elections have only strengthened the perception that the leadership has lost its grip over the organisation.

DV Sadananda Gowda | BY Vijayendra | R Ashoka

Several leaders, particularly from the old guard, are said to be unhappy with the current power structure, arguing that both Vijayendra and Ashoka have failed to provide effective political direction.

"The bypoll defeats and cross-voting are not isolated incidents—they are symptoms of a deeper organisational illness," observed another senior leader.

Factionalism has emerged as the biggest headache for the Karnataka BJP, with leaders increasingly aligning themselves with individual power centres rather than the party organisation. Insiders admit that directives issued by the party's state president are often ignored or implemented half-heartedly.

"Groupism has reached alarming proportions. Many leaders are functioning independently, and discipline has become the biggest casualty," a party insider said.

Veteran leaders have reportedly conveyed their concerns to the BJP central leadership on multiple occasions, urging immediate intervention before the internal discord inflicts lasting electoral damage. However, many in the state unit privately complain that the central leadership appears preoccupied with national issues, allowing Karnataka's problems to fester.

Despite the visible turmoil, sections of the BJP remain confident that anti-incumbency against the Congress government will pave the way for a comeback in the 2028 Assembly elections. Yet political observers warn that such optimism may be misplaced.

"If the BJP believes anti-incumbency alone will deliver victory, it is living in a fool's paradise," said a political analyst. "Unless the leadership douses the fire raging within its own house, the Congress could well benefit from the BJP's internal battle and secure another term."

For Karnataka BJP, the challenge is no longer just taking on the Congress—it is first restoring unity within its own saffron ranks.

'Ethanol blending an experiment, results likely next year'

NEW DELHI

The Centre on Tuesday told the Supreme Court that its 20% ethanol blending programme in petrol is still an "ongoing experiment" and that the full impact of the policy is expected to become clear only next year.

Attorney General R Venkataramani, appearing for the Centre and Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL), said this during a hearing on a dispute over ethanol supply allocation for 2025-26.

His remarks come amid an ongoing debate over the ethanol blending programme, with critics raising concerns that higher ethanol content could affect older vehicles and reduce fuel efficiency. The government, however, has consistently defended the initiative, saying it is aimed at improving energy security, reducing dependence on imported crude oil, cutting emissions and boosting farmers' incomes.

The Supreme Court directed that the status quo be maintained on supply allocation for the ethanol supply year 2025-26 while hearing BPCL's appeal against a Karnataka High Court order.

A vacation bench also issued notices to the Union government and 23 distilleries on BPCL's appeal challenging the high court's directions.

State rolls out 'Operation RISE', 'Beda Bro' to curb menace

BENGALURU

The Karnataka government on Tuesday launched two major anti-drug initiatives—Operation RISE and the 'Beda Bro' awareness campaign—to intensify its fight against narcotics and make the state drug-free.

The initiatives focus on stricter enforcement, public awareness and rehabilitation. Operation RISE will strengthen coordinated action against drug trafficking, while the youth-centric 'Beda Bro' campaign will educate young people about the harmful effects of substance abuse through workshops, social media outreach and community programmes.

The government also announced the destruction of 4,276.405 kg of seized narcotics worth about Rs. 97.90 crore after obtaining court approval.

Official data showed that drugs worth Rs. 216.93 crore were seized in 2025, while seizures worth Rs. 184.72 crore were made between January and May 2026. The government reiterated its zero-tolerance policy and pledged to continue coordinated efforts involving police, educational institutions and civil society to eliminate drug abuse.

CM: Resume Bandipur-Nagarahole safaris with strict safety measures

Bengaluru: Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Tuesday directed officials to resume safari and eco-tourism activities in Bandipur and Nagarahole national parks with appropriate safety measures in place.

He issued the directive during a meeting of the Standing Committee of the Karnataka State Wildlife Board at Vidhana Soudha.

The CM is the chairman of the wildlife board. Officials informed the meeting that tiger and leopard densities were higher in the eco-tourism and safari zones of Bandipur and Nagarahole than in areas witnessing high levels of human-wildlife conflict.

"In this context, the CM directed that safari activities be resumed by strictly following the necessary precautionary and safety measures so that there is no compromise on the safety of tourists," the CMO said in a statement. At the meeting, officials said the construction of the Bengaluru–Mysore Infrastructure Corridor had obstructed the traditional movement routes of elephants, tigers and leopards.

"As a result, wildlife is moving out of forest areas into the Channapatna and Ramanagara regions, which is also a major reason for the increase in human-wildlife conflict," the CMO said.

Officials informed the meeting that when permission was granted for the construction of the Bengaluru–Mysuru Expressway, it was subject to the condition that the required underpasses, overpasses and wildlife corridors be built to facilitate the safe movement of wildlife.

Mekedatu: 'Examine, resolve if any tech issues'

The CM noted that Tamil Nadu was attempting to raise objections before the Supreme Court over the Mekedatu Project by citing "minor technical issues." He directed officials to examine whether such technical issues exist and resolve them effectively. The project involves constructing a dam on the Cauvery river near its confluence with the Arkavathi.

QUICK READ

State BJP issues will be resolved in two months: Suresh Gowda

CH NEWS, BENGALURU
The confusion within the Karnataka BJP will be resolved within the next two months, as the party's high command is expected to take decisive steps, MLA Suresh Gowda said on Tuesday. Responding to questions about the alleged audio clip linked to former Chief Minister Sadananda Gowda, he noted that Sadananda Gowda had himself denied the audio was his, leaving nothing further to comment on. Suresh Gowda described the recent cross-voting episode as a turning point that would help end internal differences. He expressed confidence that the BJP high command would restore unity and strengthen the party. He also dismissed Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar's chief ministerial ambitions as "daydreaming" and predicted the BJP-JD(S) alliance would win 175 seats in the 2028 Assembly elections.

JD(S), BJP seek FIR against Pradeep Eshwar

CH NEWS, BENGALURU
The JD(S) and BJP have demanded that the Karnataka government register an FIR against Congress MLA Pradeep Eshwar over the slipper-hurling incident during the Kempegowda Jayanti celebrations in Chikkaballapur. JD(S) Youth Wing president Nikhil Kumaraswamy accused the government of practising targeted politics after nine persons linked to the JD(S) and BJP were arrested. He alleged that the MLA had instigated the crowd and urged the government to file a case against him. BJP MP K. Sudhakar also sought an FIR against those who allegedly provoked the gathering and disrespected Bengaluru founder Kempegowda, demanding that Pradeep Eshwar be named as Accused No. 1 in the case.

HC issues notices on plea against Turf Club relocation

CH NEWS, BENGALURU
The Karnataka High Court has issued notices to the state and central governments on a public interest litigation (PIL) challenging the proposed relocation of the Bengaluru Turf Club (BTC) to the 457-acre Kunigal Stud Farm. A division bench comprising Chief Justice Vibhu Bakhru and Justice K.S. Hemalekha also issued notices to the National Biodiversity Board, Karnataka State Biodiversity Board and the BTC. The PIL, filed by Bengaluru resident Vijay Nishanth, contends that the historic Kunigal Stud Farm, dating back to the era of Tipu Sultan, is an ecologically sensitive area. It argues that introducing racing and commercial activities would fragment its ecosystem and cause irreversible environmental damage.

Bengaluru's dog shelter plan faces hurdles as NGOs raise design, staffing concerns

NGOs cite staffing shortages, shelter design flaws, and regulatory concerns over project implementation

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The Greater Bengaluru Authority's (GBA) ambitious plan to relocate stray dogs from institutional areas into dedicated shelters by the end of July has encountered fresh challenges, with animal welfare organisations expressing reluctance to take up shelter management due to operational and infrastructural concerns.

While GBA officials remain optimistic about commencing the relocation drive, NGOs experienced in implementing Animal Birth Control (ABC) programmes have shown limited interest in participating in the tender process. The primary concerns include a shortage of trained personnel, uncertainty over compliance with pollution control norms, and the practicality of the shelter design.

A senior GBA official said the responsibility for appointing agencies to manage the shelters rests with the five newly formed city corporations. "The GBA is not involved in selecting the agencies. We are only monitoring the progress of the tender process and receiving periodic updates from the corporations," the official said.

According to the official, shelters in the North and South City Corporations have already been completed, while construction is progressing in the Central and West City Corporations. At least four corporations are expected to begin relocating stray dogs by the end of July.

However, NGOs remain unconvinced. Representatives from several organisations said the shelter layout itself has become a major deterrent. They argued that any assessment of the proposed facilities should involve experts from veterinary science, environmental management, engineering and public health to ensure the shelters are both functional and compliant with animal welfare standards.

They also pointed out that operating large shelters requires a steady workforce, veterinary support and strict waste management systems, all of which remain difficult to guarantee under the current framework.

Bengaluru North City Corporation Commissioner Pommala Sunil Kumar said the dog shelter at Medi Agrahara has been completed and that the corporation is in the final stages of appointing an agency to operate it.

"We have received only one bidder and expect to issue the work order within a day or two," he said.

Sunil Kumar noted that the corporation has been receiving frequent complaints from residents seeking the relocation of aggressive stray dogs. Besides accommodating dogs shifted from institutional areas, the shelters will also be used to monitor and manage dogs displaying aggressive behaviour.

He acknowledged that some animal welfare activists have opposed the relocation programme, questioning whether the identified dogs are genuinely aggressive. Nevertheless, the corporation is attempting to balance public safety concerns with animal welfare obligations.

With tenders yet to attract wider participation and operational concerns remaining unresolved, the success of Bengaluru's stray dog relocation initiative will depend not only on constructing shelters but also on establishing a sustainable management system capable of addressing both civic and animal welfare needs.

High Court to hear tunnel road PILs on July 6

CH NEWS
BENGALURU
The Karnataka High Court has scheduled July 6 for the final hearing of a batch of public interest litigations (PILs) challenging the state government's proposed tunnel road project connecting Hebbal and Silk Board in Bengaluru.

A division bench comprising Chief Justice Vibhu Bakhru and Justice K.S. Hemalekha fixed the date while hearing petitions filed by actor-director Prakash Belawadi, former bureaucrat Dr. A. Ravindra, the Citizen Action Forum and others.

During Tuesday's hearing, counsel for the petitioners, along with lawyers representing Bengaluru South MP Tejasvi Surya, informed the court that the government was proposing to acquire around five acres of Lalbagh Botanical Garden for the tunnel alignment.

They argued that such acquisition would cause irreversible damage to the historic and ecologically sensitive heritage site and sought an interim stay on the project.

The bench, however, observed that it did not have sufficient time to hear the matter in detail and adjourned the case to July 6. Petitioners requested the court to maintain status quo until then, following which the bench granted an early hearing date.

At an earlier hearing, the High Court had issued notices to the state government, the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA), the State Environmental Impact Assessment Authority (SEIAA), the Directorate of Urban Land Transport (DULT), Bengaluru Smart Infrastructure Limited (B-SMILE), Radik Consultants and Altinok Consultants, among other respondents.

The bench had also suggested obtaining the opinion of the Geological Survey of India (GSI) regarding the feasibility and risks of constructing an underground tunnel beneath environmentally sensitive areas, including Lalbagh Botanical Garden.

CBI opposes bail for Vinay Kulkarni in Yogesh Gowda murder case

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Tuesday opposed the bail plea of Congress leader and former MLA Vinay Kulkarni before the Karnataka High Court, alleging that he had conspired to murder BJP leader Yogesh Gowda due to political rivalry and personal animosity.

The submissions were made before a division bench comprising Justices Mohammad Nawaz and G. Basavaraj during the hearing of petitions filed by Kulkarni and former MLA Chandrashekhar Indi, who are serving life sentences in the murder case and have sought suspension of their sentences and release on bail pending appeal.Appearing for the CBI, Additional Solicitor General S.V. Raju argued that Kulkarni had misused his political influence and position to orchestrate the murder.

Coimbatore-Mumbai Express gets Yelahanka stop, mega railway terminal planned

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Union Minister of State for Railways and Jal Shakti V. Somanna on Tuesday flagged off the inaugural halt of the Coimbatore-Lokmanya Tilak Terminus (Mumbai)-Coimbatore Express at Yelahanka railway station, marking a significant boost to rail connectivity for the rapidly expanding northern Bengaluru suburb.

Speaking at the event, Somanna said the new halt would benefit thousands of passengers from Yelahanka and surrounding areas by providing direct access to one of the important long-distance trains operating between Karnataka and Maharashtra.

Highlighting the area's rapid urban growth, the minister announced that Indian Railways is planning to establish a mega railway terminal at Yelahanka. The proposed terminal is expected to reduce the burden on Bengaluru's existing railway stations, particularly Krantivira Sangolli Rayanna (Bengaluru City), Yeshwantpur and Bengaluru Cantonment stations, which currently handle heavy passenger traffic.

He also said Bengaluru Cantonment and Yeshwantpur railway stations are being upgraded to world-class standards as part of Indian Railways' station redevelopment programme.

Somanna said infrastructure development remains a priority for the Railways, adding that the Bengaluru Cantonment-Whitefield quadrilateral rail project is progressing steadily. He further stated that Indian Railways is working towards the phased elimination of all level crossings to improve passenger and road safety.

The minister also announced a proposal for a new direct railway line connecting Whitefield and Kolar via Hoskote, which is expected to improve connectivity to the eastern parts of Bengaluru and neighbouring districts.

As per the revised timetable, Train No. 11013 Lokmanya Tilak Terminus-Coimbatore Express will arrive at Yelahanka railway station at 7.28 p.m. and depart at 7.30 p.m. from June 30 onwards. The corresponding Coimbatore-Lokmanya Tilak Terminus service will also halt at the station, benefiting regular commuters and long-distance travellers.

Yelahanka MLA S.R. Vishwanath thanked the Railway Minister for approving the additional stop and said it fulfilled a long-pending demand of local residents. Rajya Sabha member Lehar Singh Siroya and Bengaluru Division Additional Divisional Railway Manager Parikshit Mohanpuria were also present at the programme.

More train halts sought-Chikkaballapur MP Dr. K. Sudhakar welcomed the decision, saying the new halt would greatly benefit students, employees, professionals and other passengers travelling from Yelahanka and nearby localities.

Considering the area's rapid expansion, he urged the Railway Ministry to provide halts for more long-distance trains at Yelahanka. He also requested the speedy completion of land acquisition for the sanctioned Chikkabanavara-Gollahalli and Soladevanahalli Road Overbridge (ROB) projects to improve connectivity and ease traffic congestion.

CBSE students urge KEA to accept revaluation marks for CET rankings

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Several Class 12 students of the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) have urged the Karnataka Examinations Authority (KEA) to consider their revised board examination marks after revaluation while calculating Common Entrance Test (CET) ranks, arguing that the updated scores could significantly improve their admission prospects.

Under the current admission formula, CET ranks are determined by giving equal weightage to Class 12 marks and CET scores. However, KEA prepared the rank list using the original CBSE results released before the completion of the revaluation process.

The demand comes in the wake of widespread complaints over discrepancies in the initial CBSE results, which students attributed to the board's on-screen evaluation process. Many candidates secured higher marks after their answer scripts were re-evaluated.

Parents said the revised marks could substantially improve their children's CET rankings and enhance their chances of securing seats in preferred engineering and professional colleges.

"My daughter received two additional marks after revaluation. Even a small increase can make a significant difference in CET rankings," a parent said, urging KEA to revise the merit list.

Another parent argued that the issue was not comparable to improvement examinations, as the revised marks resulted from correction of evaluation errors rather than fresh attempts by students. They also pointed out that Tamil Nadu delayed its merit list preparation to incorporate CBSE revaluation results.

Parents further noted that while Karnataka considered II PUC Exam-2 marks for state board students in preparing CET rankings, CBSE students whose marks improved after revaluation were not extended similar consideration.

KEA, however, maintained that it has no provision to revise CET rankings based on revaluated board examination marks. Executive Director H. Prasanna said such a revision would not be feasible as the option-entry process for counselling has already commenced.

This year's CET results saw a majority of top ranks going to Karnataka PU board students, with CBSE candidates generally scoring lower in the initial board evaluation.

Meanwhile, KEA said it has received the seat matrix for all professional courses except B.Pharm, Pharm.D, and Yoga and Naturopathy programmes, for which approval is awaited from the Health and Family Welfare Department.

Umapathy vows to expose Vokkaligara Sangha scam allegations

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Vokkaligara Sangha director and film producer Umapathy Srinivasa Gowda on Tuesday claimed he possesses records of alleged irregularities within the State Vokkaligara Sangha and vowed to make them public if the ongoing dispute continues.

Addressing reporters, Umapathy said he would prefer the issues to be resolved internally. However, if the conflict escalates, he is prepared to reveal what he described as documentary evidence of every alleged scam involving certain office-bearers of the Sangha.

"I have records of all the irregularities. If the fight continues, I am ready. I will place every piece of evidence before the media," he said.

While expressing confidence in Sangha president Srinivas, Umapathy alleged that the president was not being given the freedom to function independently.

Over 10,000 students take anti-drug pledge in Whitefield awareness drive

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

More than 10,000 students participated in an anti-drug awareness programme organised by the Whitefield Sub-Division on Tuesday, reinforcing the message of a drug-free society.

Held under the leadership of ACP Reena Suvarna, the initiative brought together students from Cambridge Institution and SEA College. As part of the programme, the students took an anti-drug pledge, promising to stay away from narcotics and spread awareness about the harmful effects of substance abuse among their peers and communities.

The event highlighted the importance of educating young people about the physical, mental and social consequences of drug abuse. Police officials also encouraged students to act as ambassadors against drugs by promoting healthy lifestyles and reporting any drug-related activities.

The programme is part of the Whitefield police's ongoing efforts to strengthen anti-drug awareness among youth and educational institutions.

SETBACK FOR EARNING WIFE

HC denies maintenance to wife earning more than husband

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The Karnataka High Court has ruled that a financially independent wife earning more than her husband is not entitled to maintenance merely because she is a woman. Setting aside a trial court's order, the High Court quashed the direction requiring a husband to pay his wife interim maintenance of Rs. 20,000 per month.

Justice Dr. Chillakur Sumalatha passed the order while allowing a petition filed by the husband challenging the trial court's maintenance award.

The court observed that maintenance cannot be granted based on gender-based assumptions that a husband must invariably support his wife. Instead, courts must examine the financial circumstances of both parties before awarding interim or permanent maintenance.

It held that where a wife is financially stable, earns more than her husband and has no additional responsibilities such as caring for children, there is no justification for directing the husband to pay maintenance.

The judgment stressed that family courts should not be influenced by the traditional notion that wives must always be maintained by their husbands. Maintenance, the court said, should be awarded only when it is established that the wife lacks sufficient financial resources to support herself.

Referring to the facts of the case, the bench noted that the wife had admitted to earning about Rs. 1 lakh per month, while the husband drew a monthly salary of Rs. 60,646. Given her higher income, the court said she was capable of maintaining herself and that directing the husband to pay Rs. 20,000 every month was legally unsustainable.

"The court should not proceed to award maintenance solely on the assumption that men are bound to maintain women," the judgment observed, adding that the financial capacity and needs of both spouses must remain the determining factors.

The dispute arose after the couple, who married in 2024, began living separately within a few months due to matrimonial differences. The wife subsequently approached the trial court seeking maintenance, which resulted in an order directing the husband to pay Rs. 20,000 per month.

Challenging the order, the husband contended that his wife's income exceeded his own and that she was financially self-sufficient. Accepting his argument, the High Court set aside the interim maintenance order.

However, the court clarified that its ruling pertains only to interim maintenance and will not influence the final adjudication of the matrimonial dispute, which will be decided independently by the trial court based on the evidence presented by both parties.

QUICK READ

Hostel applications open for eligible students

GADAG

Applications are invited from students seeking fresh admission to hostels under the Backward Classes Welfare Department for the 2026-27 academic year. Only general degree course students are eligible to apply. The department informed that the last date for submitting applications is July 20. Interested students can contact the District Backward Classes Welfare Department office for more details. Officials said the hostel facilities will support students during their studies and help them continue education without difficulties. The department requested eligible candidates to apply before the deadline and benefit from the available hostel services provided by the government this year.

Rajput leaders call for better welfare and opportunities

GADAG

The Gadag Betageri Rajput Society submitted a petition to the Chief Minister through District Magistrate C.N. Sridhar, seeking better support for the community. The society said many Rajput families remain economically and educationally backward, with limited job opportunities. Leaders stressed that young people need proper guidance and encouragement to join the mainstream. Society president Ganesh Singh Byali led the delegation. The District Magistrate accepted the petition and assured members it would be forwarded with suitable recommendations. Devi Singh Byali, Shed Singh Jamadar, and others attended, expressing hope for positive government action.

M B Patil predicts cabinet expansion in next 15 days

The minister assured adequate funds for drinking water projects, prioritising uninterrupted safe water supply over other development works if necessary

BAGALKOT

State Minister for Large and Medium Industries M.B. Patil announced that the Karnataka Cabinet is expected to be expanded within the next 15 days. He said the decision would be taken by the Congress high command and expressed confidence that Bagalkot district would receive representation in the expanded Cabinet.

Speaking to reporters after a district disaster management meeting in Bagalkot, Patil said the current arrangement was temporary. He assured people that new ministers would be inducted soon and added that deserving leaders from the district would likely be included during the expansion. Responding to questions about the absence of a minister from Bagalkot in the present Cabinet, Patil said the matter was entirely in the hands of the party leadership. He explained that the Congress high command would make the final decision and that he had no role in selecting ministers.

The minister also reviewed the drought situation in the district and stressed that there would be no shortage of funds for drinking water projects. He said providing safe drinking water to people was the government's highest priority. If needed, other development works could be delayed to ensure water supply remained uninterrupted.

Patil said Rs. 12 crore had already been released for drought management in Bagalkot district, while additional funds were also available if required. He assured that drinking water, cattle fodder and farmers' concerns would receive immediate attention. He added that the Chief Minister, Deputy Chief Minister and other ministers would work together to address the situation effectively.

Earlier, Patil chaired a district-level disaster management meeting attended by public representatives, senior officials and elected members. During the review, he sought updates on drought preparedness, water availability and the condition of dam crest gates. He directed officials to replace rusted gates without delay to avoid future problems.

The minister also expressed strong displeasure over delays in providing electricity connections for water supply projects. He criticized the absence of the HESCOM Executive Engineer from the meeting and questioned officials about pending work. Calling the delay unacceptable, Patil issued a final warning and said strict disciplinary action, including suspension, would follow if responsibilities continued to be neglected. He urged every department to act quickly and ensure public services were delivered without further delays.

Collector Sridhar urges voters to join SIR process

Sridhar urged voters to complete SIR forms on time, saying public participation, verification drives and accurate records would ensure transparent, error-free electoral rolls.

GADAG

The Special Intensive Revision (SIR) enumeration campaign was launched in Gadag on Tuesday by Deputy Commissioner C.N. Sridhar, who distributed forms to respected personalities from different fields to encourage public participation in updating the voter list.

During the programme, SIR forms were handed over to Venerable Shivananda Sri of Shivananda Math, international wrestler Prema Huchannavara and social figure Abubakar Kattimani. The campaign aimed to create awareness among citizens about the importance of correct voter details and timely submission of forms with required documents.

Speaking at the event, Sridhar said public cooperation is essential for the success of the SIR process. He urged eligible voters to complete the forms carefully and submit them within the stipulated time to help make elections more transparent and efficient.

He added that involvement of leaders and public figures from various sectors would motivate more people to take part in the revision work. BLOs will conduct house-to-house surveys and verification from June 30 to July 29, after which the draft voter list will be released on August 5.

The administration has compared current records with earlier voter lists to identify genuine voters and remove duplicate or incorrect names. Citizens who need changes can provide valid documents for inclusion in the electoral roll. Aadhaar will only serve as identity proof according to officials.

Sridhar said the revision process is important for democracy because an accurate voter list helps citizens exercise their rights properly. He requested religious, social and community groups to spread awareness and support the Election Commission's efforts. The Collector also appealed to the media to share information about the campaign across the district.

Officials explained that the final voter list will be published on October 7, after addressing objections received from the public.

They said cooperation from every citizen would make the entire process smooth and reliable. Venerable Sri Kallayyajjan also encouraged people to fulfill their responsibility by checking details and completing the forms. The campaign highlighted the need for active involvement from all sections of society to strengthen democratic participation and maintain a strong democracy.

Chigateri Hospital operation theatre hit by sudden fire

DAVANGERE

An oxygen cylinder explosion occurred inside the operation theatre of Chigateri District Hospital in Davangere on Tuesday morning causing a fire that damaged medical equipment worth crores of rupees. Firefighters rushed to the spot and worked to control the flames while hospital officials inspected the affected area.

The incident happened around 8:30 am when staff were preparing for a scheduled operation. A spark reportedly appeared near the oxygen system and quickly spread inside the theatre. The fire also affected nearby rooms and equipment. Health department workers immediately moved out after noticing the danger and informed the fire brigade.

Hospital authorities said no patients were present inside the operation theatre at the time of the incident. Around six to eight staff members were there and all escaped safely. Doctors said a bigger tragedy could have happened if anesthesia had been given. The operation was planned at 9 am, but doctors arrived earlier to check the equipment. Two oxygen cylinders exploded after the fire began, creating panic among staff.

Officials said the exact reason for the explosion is still under investigation. Engineers will examine the damaged systems and prepare a detailed report. The hospital administration is also assessing the total loss caused by the incident. Quick action by the staff helped prevent serious injuries and saved many lives during the tragic event.

Young man's house damaged following relationship dispute

BELAGAVI: Three arrested persons were taken into custody after a family was attacked in Bharamyanatti village of Belagavi district over an alleged relationship with a married woman. The Marihal police arrested Nagaraj Nayak, Ravi Bijagatti, and Eshwar Mucchandi after a complaint was filed. The accused were upset with Yallappa Nayak, an unmarried youth, for allegedly taking the woman away from her husband. Police said the group entered the family home with weapons and attacked the residents. The victims alleged that swords, sickles, machetes, and clubs were used during the incident.

35-year-old woman killed inside Athani Mutt

CHIKKODI

A 35-year-old woman was allegedly murdered by her husband inside the Avajikara Mutt premises in Nandgaon village of Athani taluk, Belagavi district.

Police said the accused surrendered soon after the crime. District Superintendent of Police K. Ramarajan shared details during a press conference held in Belagavi on Tuesday.

The victim was identified as Shobha Pargunda Sarawad. Police arrested her husband, Pargunda Shankarappa Sarawad, who worked as a driver at the mutt.

The couple had been living in a room within the mutt premises for some time and had two children, aged 11 and six.

According to police, the accused had suspected his wife's behaviour for the past four to five years.

He often questioned her whenever she spoke with relatives or workers visiting the mutt.

Family elders had tried several times to settle their differences, but the arguments continued.

Police said another fight began on the night of June 27 and became serious early on June 28. During the argument, the accused allegedly attacked Shobha with an axe, causing fatal injuries. She died at the scene due to heavy bleeding.

After the incident, the accused surrendered at the police station. Officers collected evidence, seized the weapon, and registered a case. Further investigation is continuing under police supervision.

Koppal to celebrate Vachana Literature Preservation Day

KOPPAL

The district administration, Kannada and Culture Department and Koppal Municipal Corporation will celebrate Vachana Literature Preservation Day on July 2. The event will be held at Government Boys' Undergraduate College near Ashoka Circle in Koppal to mark the birthday of F. Gu. Halakatti and honor his contribution to vachana literature preservation. Koppal MLA K. Raghavendra Hitnal will inaugurate and preside over the programme. Several elected representatives and officials will attend the event as special guests. Assistant Professor Sharanabasappa Bilieli from Sri Gavisiddeshwara Arts, Commerce and Science College will deliver a special lecture on the occasion.

District officials including Collector Dr. Suresh B. Itnal and other senior officers will participate in the programme. The celebration aims to create awareness about vachana literature and the efforts made by Halakatti to protect and spread the valuable works of saints and thinkers. The event will encourage people to remember the importance of Kannada heritage and continue preserving literary traditions for future generations across the state.

Allegations rise over exam irregularities in Gadag

GADAG

Serious allegations of rule violations have emerged during the Senior Secondary Direct Examination held at an examination centre in Gadag city.

The examination was conducted at Aryabhata Independent Pre-University College on Kalasapur Road, which was selected as a centre for the exam organized by Bharat Institute of Schooling Education Board, Bengaluru.

Reports claimed that several irregularities took place during the examination, including students writing exams in crowded rooms and doors of examination halls being closed. Around 48 candidates were reportedly seated in one room, with nearly 240 students appearing across five rooms.

There were also allegations that the examination process was not conducted properly and that some candidates were allowed to appear after paying money. During the English examination, claims were made that the doors of rooms were locked from outside and invigilators were using mobile phones inside the halls.

When media representatives visited the centre to record the situation, examination staff reportedly objected and asked them to stay away from the premises.

Legal awareness programmes planned across Koppal district

KOPPAL

The District Legal Services Authority held its bimonthly meeting on Monday at the district court premises, where officials discussed plans to improve legal awareness programmes and provide support to citizens through different government departments.

Vedamurthy B.S., First Additional District and Sessions Judge of the Gangavathi Bench, instructed department officials to organize legal awareness assistance programmes effectively in coordination with the District Legal Services Authority. He said cooperation between departments is necessary for the success of upcoming legal service activities.

Speaking at the meeting through a virtual platform, Vedamurthy highlighted the importance of government support for the National Lok Adalat scheduled on July 11 and the Special Lok Adalat planned in August. He urged officials to work together and ensure that people benefit from these initiatives.

He also directed departments to observe Anti-Human Trafficking Day on July 30 with proper awareness activities. Officials were asked to conduct training programmes for mediators and create awareness about Lok Adalat procedures and mediation services. A door-to-door campaign under the "Back to School" initiative was also suggested to encourage school dropouts to return to education. The judge further stressed the need to spread awareness in schools and colleges about the harmful effects of drug use and related laws. He also called for special legal awareness programmes on the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act and the Juvenile Justice Act.

Everyone must help stop atrocities against communities: DC

GADAG

Deputy Commissioner C.N. Sridhar said that controlling atrocities against Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes is the responsibility of everyone and officials must work with dedication to protect social justice.

He was speaking at the district-level Atrocities Control Committee meeting held at the Deputy Commissioner's office in Gadag on Tuesday.

Sridhar directed authorities to support students from Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes who study in prestigious schools and encourage them to take part in academic and other activities. He said providing quality education and proper opportunities to children is very important.

The Deputy Commissioner also instructed officials to ensure basic facilities like roads, electricity and clean drinking water in Scheduled Community colonies. He said compensation for eligible victims in atrocity cases should be provided without delay.

He stressed that people from weaker sections must receive benefits related to housing, healthcare and education on time. The selection of beneficiaries should remain transparent and there should be no misuse of government facilities, he added.

During the meeting, officials reviewed the action taken report from the previous session and discussed various issues related to welfare and protection measures.

District Superintendent of Police Rohan Jagadish, DySP Mahantesh Sajjana, Project Director Basana Gowda Kotura, DHO Dr. S. S. Neelgund, DDPI R. S. Burudi and other department officials attended the meeting.

Members of the committee also shared suggestions to improve implementation of welfare schemes. Social Welfare Department Deputy Director Nanda Hanabaratti welcomed the participants and proposed the vote of thanks.

The administration stated that continued cooperation between departments and the public is necessary to create a safer and more equal society.

COOPERATIVE-WELLNESS-DRIVE

Cooperative health awareness program held at Lakshmeshwar

GADAG

The Cooperation Department, Karnataka State Cooperative Federation, and district cooperative organizations jointly organized a health awareness program for cooperative society members at Lakshmeshwar on Tuesday. The event marked five years of the Central Cooperative Ministry and focused on improving health, awareness and participation among members.

The program was inaugurated by G V Patil, Director of KCC Bank, Dharwad, who highlighted the need to strengthen cooperatives through transparency, digital services and good governance. He said cooperative societies should promote employment, income growth and self-reliance among rural communities. He also encouraged awareness through Gram Sabha, farmer meetings, women's groups and educational institutions.

Vijayakumar Makki, President of Primary Agricultural Cooperative Society, said the government has taken steps to expand the cooperative sector and empower rural people. He mentioned the growth of new societies and the importance of member involvement.

Neela P, Chief Executive Officer of Manini Multi-Purpose Cooperative Society, explained that awareness activities are conducted with local departments to help members understand benefits.

Somesh Jagadish Upanal, President of TAPCMS, said health is essential for a better future and urged members to use the free health check-up facility. He added that cooperative membership helps families access schemes like Yashaswini at lower costs.

Doctors conducted health examinations and shared useful guidance on maintaining good health. Dr Priyanka Sanganagoudara delivered a lecture on health awareness and examined participants during the camp. Officials and cooperative leaders attended the program and supported the initiative.

The organizers said such programs will continue to create awareness and improve the lives of cooperative members across the district. The effort will encourage stronger communities through active public cooperative participation.

QUICK READ

Ismail Zabiullah wins State Bar Council election

CH NEWS, KOPPAL

Former Koppal Municipal Council president and senior minority community leader Amjad Patel congratulated S. Ismail Zabiullah on his election as a member of the Karnataka State Bar Council. Zabiullah, who serves as the Additional Advocate General of the State Government, secured the position in the recent council elections. Amjad Patel expressed happiness over the result and said Zabiullah's victory was a proud moment for everyone who supported him. He hoped the newly elected member would work honestly for the welfare of advocates, strengthen the council, and contribute to the development of society. Patel also said he actively campaigned for Zabiullah across several districts in North Karnataka and sought public support for his candidature. He added that he was pleased to have worked for a deserving candidate and thanked everyone who contributed to the successful campaign. He expressed confidence that Zabiullah would continue serving both the legal community and society with dedication, fairness, and commitment during his tenure ahead.

Students using NWKRTC can get free bus pass refunds

CH NEWS, Gadag

Students using North West Karnataka Road Transport Corporation buses can receive refunds for paid bus passes for the 2026-27 academic year through Seva Sindhu portal. The government has approved free bus passes for school and college students and ordered repayment of fees already paid. Students must apply online with their mobile number and OTP details. They should complete Aadhaar e-KYC and provide bank account information. The refund amount will be credited through NEFT or RTGS within seven days after submission. Officials said students need not visit counters for refunds as the money will reach their bank accounts.

BJP probe struggles to identify council cross voting

12 BJP-JD(S) legislators reportedly backed Congress' 5th candidate, who won highest votes, while one vote was invalidated

SHYAM SUNDAR VATTAM, CH NEWS

The Karnataka BJP appears set to quietly draw the curtains on the embarrassing cross-voting episode in the recent biennial elections to the State Legislative Council, with the party's internal probe reportedly yielding more speculation than concrete evidence.

A fact-finding committee headed by former minister and MLC C.T. Ravi has submitted its preliminary report after examining the suspected cross-voting by legislators during the Council polls. However, party insiders admit that the inquiry has reached a dead end because the election was conducted through a secret ballot, making it virtually impossible to identify the defectors with certainty.

According to a member of the committee, nearly a dozen legislators from the BJP-JD(S) alliance are believed to have voted in favour of the Congress' fifth candidate, who stunned political observers by securing the highest number of votes among the winners. One vote was also declared invalid.

"Without documentary evidence or an open ballot, branding any MLA as a cross-voter would be politically and legally risky," a member of the inquiry committee said.

The preliminary report has been submitted to State BJP President B.Y. Vijayendra and forwarded to the party's central leadership. Sources indicate that the high command is unlikely to order a deeper investigation unless compelling new evidence surfaces.

"The report may well end up in cold storage. The leadership knows disciplinary action without proof could backfire," a senior party source remarked.

Interestingly, suspended BJP MLAs Shivaram Hebbar and S.T. Somashekar had publicly acknowledged voting for the Congress, claiming no senior BJP leader had sought their support. Beyond those admissions, the identities of the remaining suspected cross-voters remain a closely guarded mystery.

Party insiders allege that the Congress leadership, led by Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar, exploited internal divisions within the BJP and reached out to disgruntled legislators. Yet, with no verifiable evidence, these allegations remain politically explosive but legally unenforceable.

The mood within sections of the BJP suggests there is little appetite for prolonging an episode that has only exposed cracks within the Opposition ranks. "The inquiry seems to have been more about sending a message that the party acted than actually catching the rebels," another BJP functionary observed. With the secrecy of the ballot shielding the alleged dissenters and the leadership wary of triggering another round of factional tensions, the cross-voting saga appears destined to fade into the background—an uncomfortable reminder of the BJP's internal fault lines rather than a scandal likely to produce disciplinary action.

Need for open ballot system

Former minister and senior BJP leader N Mahesh opined that the biennial elections to the Legislative Council from the Legislative Assembly must be open ballot in order to avoid the social malady called cross voting. Of late, cross voting has become a big ache for the political parties as the legislators, falling prey to money and other favors, do cross voting. It is very difficult to find out those black sheep due to want of evidence. When the elections to Rajya Sabha is open ballot, why not for the Legislative Council. There is a need to bring the suitable amendments to the existing laws to make it mandate that the MLAs must show the ballot papers to their political agents to whom they voted for. This would end the menace of cross voting permanently. All political parties must ponder over this matter and take a long standing solution for this malady.

Debate on over proposal to hold Kambala during Mysuru Dasara

MYSURU

The Karnataka government's reported move to organise a Kambala, the traditional buffalo race of the coastal region, as part of this year's Mysuru Dasara celebrations has triggered widespread debate among citizens, environmentalists, farmers' organisations and progressive groups in the city.

Several organisations have expressed concern that while Kambala is an integral part of the cultural heritage of coastal Karnataka, introducing it into Mysuru's iconic Dasara festivities could affect the festival's unique historical identity and cultural legacy. They argue that Mysuru Dasara, celebrated for its royal grandeur, centuries-old traditions and global recognition, should retain its distinct character rather than incorporating events that are not historicall y associated with the festival.

Environmental issues have also emerged as a major point of contention. Activists fear that infrastructure required for hosting the event could lead to the felling of trees and damage to the local ecology. They have also questioned the expenditure of crores of rupees on arrangements for an event expected to attract large crowds, stating that such spending should be carefully evaluated in the larger public interest.

Against this backdrop, a public meeting has been convened on July 2 at 3.30 pm at Jaladarshini Guest House, Mysuru, to facilitate a broader discussion on the proposal and its possible impact on the city's heritage, environment and cultural identity.

The meeting is expected to be attended by Badagalapura Nagendra, State President of the Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha, along with other office-bearers, Major General Sudhir Ombatkere, environmental activists, Dr. Ramakrishnappa of Belavala Foundation, heritage expert Prof. N. S. Rangaraju, Ugranarasimha Gowda, leaders of progressive organisations and representatives of Kan nada organisations. Organisers have appealed to the people of Mysuru to participate in large numbers and contribute to the discussion on preserving the city's environmental balance, protecting its rich cultural heritage and safeguarding the identity and dignity of the world-renowned Nada Habba Mysuru Dasara.

The meeting is being organised under the leadership of Parashuramegowda, General Secretary of Parisarakke Navu, who said the discussion aims to arrive at a collective public opinion on the issue before any final decision is taken.

Udupi begins voter revision and safety campaign

UDUPI

The special comprehensive revision of the voters' list began in Udupi district on Tuesday with Booth Level Officers visiting houses and distributing enumeration forms to citizens. District Collector Swaroopa T.K. inspected several areas and said the main aim was to include all eligible voters in the electoral roll.

She urged people to check their details and cooperate with officials during the verification process. BLOs will continue house-to-house visits until July 29, collecting forms, documents and photographs from residents. The filled forms require voter signatures or thumb impressions. The draft voter list will be published on August 5, while objections can be submitted until September 4, and the final list is scheduled for release on October 7.

Officials also discussed steps to control drugs and tobacco use in the district. A QR code has been created for citizens to share information about drug transport, sale and usage. Collector She said details of informants would remain confidential and requested public support to make Udupi drug-free.

She instructed departments to spread awareness in schools, colleges and public places about harmful effects of drugs. Officials were asked to inspect farms, forests and medical shops regularly to prevent illegal activities. Anti-drug committees should work actively in educational institutions to protect students from addiction.

The administration also reviewed tobacco control measures under COTPA rules. Several areas including villages and wards are being encouraged to become tobacco-free zones through public participation. Authorities said tobacco causes serious health problems and awareness drives should continue. More than 33 raids have been conducted and cases registered against violations related to tobacco products. Officials said regular inspections would continue across the district to ensure compliance with the law.

The meetings were attended by senior officials including police representatives and health department officers. The district administration emphasized that cooperation from citizens is necessary for successful implementation of these programmes.

The combined efforts aim to improve voter records, protect public health and create a safer environment where every citizen can contribute towards a better future with responsibility, unity and awareness across the entire district.

Civil society groups protest SIR exercise in Mysuru

MYSURU

Members of the Janasanghatane Okkuta (People's Organisations Federation) staged a protest in front of the Deputy Commissioner's new office in Mysuru on Tuesday, condemning the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the electoral rolls and accusing the Election Commission of adopting an undemocratic approach.

The protesters submitted a memorandum through the Deputy Commissioner to the Election Commission, urging it to respond to the four key demands earlier raised by civil society organisations to make the SIR process more democr atic, transparent and inclusive.

The organisations pointed out that they had already submitted memoranda across Karnataka on May 30 through district and taluk administrations. They also recalled inviting Ele ction Commission officials to a major protest convention held at Freedom Park in Bengaluru on June 20 to hear the concerns of civil society and explain the rationale behind the SIR exercise. Eminent writers, intellectuals, artists and theatre personalities had also written an open letter seeking clarification. The protesters alleged that the Commission had not responded either to these appeals or to a letter reportedly sent by the State Government.

Organisations claimed the Election Commission ignored memoranda, protests and appeals seeking SIR clarifications from civil society, writers, and the State Government

Condemning what they described as the Commission's "authoritarian silence," the organisations said every public institution in a democracy is accountable to citizens and has a duty to answer legitimate public questions. They alleged that the Commission's continued refusal to engage with civil society amounted to a violation of democratic principles.

As part of the statewide protest, demonstrators tied black cloth over their mouths to symbolise the Election Commission's refusal to respond to public concerns. They demanded that the Commission reconsider the SIR process and address the issues raised by civil society organisations.

The protesters also warned that if the Commission continued with what they termed an arbitrary approach, including the alleged use of "logical dependency" software to delete large numbers of voters without providing adequate time for appeals, it could trigger a statewide people's movement.

The protest was organised under the banner of the SIR Virodhi Okkuta (Anti-SIR Coalition) and was supported by representatives of the People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL), Mahila Munnade, Ondagon Kaijodisi, Nele Hinnele, the Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha, the Social Democratic Party of India (SDPI), the Dalit Sangharsh Samiti, and several writers, journalists, artists and theatre activists.

Those who led the protest included Kamal Gopinath, Dr Rati Rao, Dr M.P. Purnananda, K.R. Gopalakrishna, Hosur Kumar, Amjad, Devagalli Somashekar, Jenni and G.P. Basavaraju.

Vijayendra holds village stay in Balligavi Shikaripura

SHIKARIPURA

BJP Karnataka state president and Shikaripura MLA B. Y. Vijayendra Yediyurappa stayed overnight at Balligavi village in Shivamogga district as part of a booth-level village visit programme.

The visit was organised under the Thogarsi Mahashakti Kendra of the constituency, where Vijayendra spent time in the historically significant Balligavi village. During his stay, he interacted closely with villagers, listened to their concerns, and received suggestions related to local development works.

Party leaders said the initiative was aimed at strengthening direct contact with people at the grassroots level and understanding their day-to-day issues. Vijayendra assured villagers that priority would be given to addressing public grievances and accelerating development activities in the region.

He also described the village stay programme as an effort to build stronger trust between elected representatives and the public. According to him, such initiatives help bridge the gap between administration and citizens and open the way for a new phase of development aligned with people's expectations.

During his visit, Vijayendra also undertook a morning walk in the village, during which he interacted with residents, including elders and youth who met him along the way. He spent time greeting them and enquiring about their well-being.Locals noted that the informal interactions reflected simplicity and approachability, as the MLA engaged with villagers in a relaxed manner while observing rural life closely.

Party workers accompanying him said the programme is part of a broader effort by the BJP leadership to strengthen booth-level organisation and enhance outreach in rural areas ahead of future political activities.

Farmers demand additional tobacco auction market approval

HUNSUR

The State Farmers' Association and tobacco growers submitted a petition to Auction Director Srinivas B.C. at the Chilkunda Auction Platform, requesting the approval of an additional auction market to help farmers sell their tobacco without delays.

District President of the State Farmers' Association, Hosur Kumar, said the existing auction market has enough land, but farmers are facing serious difficulties because onl y one market is functioning. He explained that growers often wait nearly a month for the ir turn to sell tobacco, making it difficult to complete sales before the auction season ends.

He urged the authorities to obtain approval from the Central Government and complete the required formalities before the next auction season begins. He requested that a new market building be constructed and made operational at the earliest for the benefit of tobacco growers. The association also raised concerns about the health fund premium provided to tobacco farmers. Members said they had been expecting a health fund of Rs.1 lakh but had not received it. They requested the authorities to increase the amount to Rs.5 lakh and grant approval for the revised benefit.

Farmers further pointed out the lack of basic facilities at the auction platforms. They appealed for the construction of canteens, farmers' shelters and rest houses to improve convenience during auction days.

YOUTH-AGAINST-DRUGS

Over 350 students take out massive 'Drugs-Free Mysuru' rally

MYSURU

A successful 'Drugs-Free Mysuru' awareness campaign was held today at De Paul Public School, located opposite Sathagalli Bus Stand in Udayagiri under the Narasimharaja Assembly constituency of Mysuru on Tuesday

The programme was organised with the objective of steering young people away from drug addiction and promoting a healthy, responsible, and drug-free society. More than 350 students enthusiastically participated in the campaign, demonstrating their commitment to creating awareness against substance abuse.

The chief guest, Udayagiri Police Circle Inspector S. Nagesh, addressed the students and delivered an inspiring and informative talk on the harmful effects of narcotic substances, the legal consequences of drug-related offences, and the importance of becoming responsible citizens. He urged students to remain vigilant and to stay away from drugs while encouraging their peers to do the same.

The programme received wholehearted support from De Paul Public School Principal Fr. Jomes and Fr. Sebastian, who appreciated the initiative and reaffirmed the institution's commitment to organising activities that instil social responsibility and positive values among students.

Among those present were Drugs-Free Mysuru campaign activist and social worker Hanif Aziz, Udayagiri Police Sub-Inspector Shivakumar, Dr. Ayub Ahmed G., teachers, and several other dignitaries.

As part of the awareness programme, students presented a thought-provoking street play highlighting the devastating consequences of drug abuse on individuals, families, and society.

This was followed by a grand awareness rally from De Paul Public School to Aziz Sait Nagar Arch, accompanied by a marching band. Carrying anti-drug placards and raising awareness slogans, over 350 students participated in the rally, drawing the attention of the public and effectively spreading the message against drug abuse.

At the conclusion of the programme, the students took a solemn pledge to contribute towards building a "Drugs-Free Mysuru – Drugs-Free India" and committed themselves to staying away from all forms of substance abuse.

The awareness campaign proved to be highly successful in educating students about the dangers of drug addiction while strengthening their sense of social responsibility, legal awareness, and the importance of leading a healthy and disciplined lifestyle.

QUICK READ

Relationship dispute leads to alleged knife attack

CH NEWS, Hunsur
A young woman was allegedly attacked with a knife after being called outside her house at night during a dispute over a relationship. Police said the incident took place in the old bridge area of the city. The accused, identified as Mohammad Faran, along with the woman's father Galib and brother Rajeek, allegedly attacked Abdul Mujahid's son. The injured youth was first taken to the city public hospital for treatment. Doctors later advised shifting him to KRS Hospital in Mysuru for further care. A complaint has been registered at the city police station, and investigation is underway.

Youth must reject drugs for healthy future: Ramesh

CH NEWS, CHITRADURGA
Turuvanur Police Station Assistant Sub Inspector Ramesh urged students to stay away from drugs and help create a healthy society. He made the statement while opening the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking 2026 programme at Koonabe vu Government High Scho ol in Turuvanur Hobli. He said repeated use of har mful substances can lead to addiction and damage brain function. Ramesh warned students that drugs can destroy their fu ture and affect their families. School headmaster Hanumanthappa said many young people are losing their lives by falling into bad habits. He added that youth are the stren gth of the nation and sho uld avoid becoming victims of addiction. The hea dmaster also stated that selling and transporting drugs are illegal activities and serious crimes. Tea chers and police staff attended the event and sup ported the message. The programme encouraged students to make responsible choices and work towards a safer, healthier community for everyone.

MLA visits Ramanath Rai residence in Bantwal

MLA Mohan met Rai at his residence for discussions, with party workers viewing it as routine political consultation

BANTWAL

Mangaluru South MLA Mohan visited the residence of former Karnataka minister and senior Congress leader B. Ramanath Rai in Bantwal on Monday, in what is seen as a courtesy and political engagement visit.

The meeting comes amid ongoing political interactions and party-level discussions in the Dakshina Kannada region, where leaders from different constituencies frequently maintain contact with senior figures of their respective parties.Ramanath Rai, a veteran Congress leader and former minister, has represented the Bantwal constituency multiple times during his long political career. He has also held key portfolios in the Karnataka government, including forest, environment, and ecology, and is known for his long-standing presence in Dakshina Kannada politics.

During the visit, MLA Mohan reportedly met Rai at his residence and held discussions, though detailed information on the agenda of the meeting was not immediately disclosed. Party workers and local leaders viewed the interaction as part of routine political courtesy and consultation within the party network.

Ramanath Rai has remained an influential figure in the region even after stepping back from active electoral politics, of ten receiving visits from senior leaders and party colleagues.

The visit reflects continued engagement between Congress leaders in coastal Karnataka, where political coordination and interpersonal connections play an important role in party organisation and local political dynamics.

Youth urged to donate blood for society

CHITRADURGA

IMA District President Dr. L. Palakshayya said young people should actively donate blood and support society through this noble service. Blood cannot be produced artificially in factories and can only be received through donation from one person to another.

He was speaking at a blood donation camp organized by the Indian Red Cross Society, Indian Medical Association and Kotenad Welfare Foundation in Chitradurga on Tuesday as part of World Blood Donor Day programs.

Dr. Palakshayya explained that one unit of donated blood can help save the lives of three people after processing and highlighted the importance of regular blood donations. He praised the efforts of the Red Cross Society for helping reduce blood shortages across the country.

The event created awareness with messages like Donate blood save a life and My blood my contribution to encourage more citizens to participate. Several regular donors were honored with certificates and mementos for their valuable contribution. Hundreds of youngsters voluntarily donated blood during the camp.

The program was attended by District Youth Officer Dhananjay Jagatap, Red Cross Society President Gayatri Shivaram, Vice President Arun Kumar, Secretary Mazhar Ullah, Treasurer Viresh and other officials. The organizers said such camps help build a healthier community and inspire more people to take responsibility for saving lives through voluntary blood donation. The initiative also promoted social unity.

Rural school gets modern facilities through partnership

DEVANAHALLI

Kempathimmanhalli Government Lower Primary School in Devanahalli taluk of Bengaluru Rural district has received a major transformation through a private partnership that improved infrastructure and learning facilities for students.

The renovation work was completed with support from bu sinessman Dr. Ronald Colasso and N.L.K. Group. The project cost about 3.50 crore with Dr. Ronald Colasso contributing 2.45 crore and N.L.K. Group providing 1.05 crore. The old bu ilding was replaced with a new structure offering modern facilities for students and teachers.

The new school includes well-equipped classrooms, a spo rts room, an Anganwadi room, clean drinking water system, auditorium, CCTV cameras and loudspeakers. Special arrangements have been made for the midday meal system. Food prepared on the ground floor is mo ved to the dining hall on the first floor through a lift-type arrangement, making the process easier.

The school has also provided furniture for teachers and facilities needed for student activities. An LED display system has been installed to support educational programmes and events. The improved environment aims to give rural children better opportunities and a comfortable place to learn.

Dr. Colasso said every child deserves quality education and proper facilities. He explained that developing schools in rural areas can help students build a stronger future. He added that a good learning environment during early education creates confidence and encourages children to achieve their goals.

Earlier in 2019, Dr. Colasso supported the construction of a modern building for a government primary and high school in Navaratna Agrahara, Bengaluru. His efforts in supporting public infrastructure have received appreciation from many sections of society.

Officials and community members said the upgraded school reflects the value of cooperation between private organizations and public institutions. The facilities will help students access better learning resources without leaving their local area.

The initiative has become an example of how partnerships can improve government schools and support children's education. With improved clas srooms, safety systems and activity spaces, Kempathimmanhalli school is now prepared to provide a better educational ex perience for rural students and inspire similar efforts elsewhere.

Hunsur college marks Anti-Drug Day meaningfully

HUNSUR

The NSS Unit of Hunsur City Girls' Government Pre-University College along with the Karnataka Government Police Department observed International Anti-Drug Day with awareness activities on Tuesday.

Assistant Sub-Inspector Ningaiah from City Police Station addressed the gathering and explained the importance of staying away from drugs. Police staff also shared information about the dangers of addiction and its impact on society. A video of a live programme organised by Bengaluru City Police officers was shown to students.

Speaker Girish explained drug abuse, causes, effects, and the role of students in creating a drug-free nation with examples. Head Constable Basave Gowda and lecturers attended the programme along with NSS volunteers.

The event encouraged youth to choose healthy habits and reject harmful substances. It highlighted that drug trafficking is illegal and affects the future of young people. The college staff supported the message and motivated students to spread awareness among their friends and communities.

SIR process begins at Banu Mushtaq residence

HASSAN

District administration launched the Special Intensive Revision of electoral rolls in Karnataka by beginning the enumeration process at writer Banu Mushtaq's residence in Pension Mohalla area of Hassan on Tuesday.

Deputy Commissioner K.S. Latha Kumari and other officials visited the home along with booth-level officers and provided enumeration forms to the family members. The writer and her husband completed the forms with required details and submitted them to the officials.

Banu Mushtaq said she was initially concerned about the SIR procedure and the documents needed for the process. She explained that the officers guided her properly and made the work easy. She said the process required basic documents including Aadhaar card and voter identity card.

Banu Mushtaq expressed initial concerns about SIR documents but received guidance. Officials confirmed successful enumeration, with forms collected and data uploaded after verification

The Deputy Commissioner said the enumeration phase had started successfully and forms were collected from the family. She added that booth-level officers will upload the collected information through the official application after verification.Latha Kumari stated that the process is simple and officers have received proper training for the exercise. She encouraged citizens across the district to cooperate and complete the revision work without confusion.

The administration said the SIR process will help maintain accurate voter records by adding eligible voters and correcting necessary details. Officials requested people to keep their documents ready and participate actively in strengthening democracy.

Banu Mushtaq also appealed to authorities to ensure that all citizens receive similar support during the exercise. The district administration assured that trained officials would assist people throughout the process and make the voter list reliable and transparent.

Saraswati remembered as women's spiritual guiding star

CHAMARAJANAGAR

Mateshwari Jagadamba Saraswati was remembered as an inspiration for women and spiritual seekers during a memorial day program held in Chamarajanagar on Tuesday.

Brahmakumari Daneshwariji said Saraswati was a symbol of wisdom and a guiding light for society. She was speaking at the 62nd memorial celebration organized by Prajapita Brahmakumari Ishwariya University. She explained that Saraswati, born as Radhe in 1919, showed great talent from a young age. She was skilled in music, acting and playing the veena. At sixteen, she received spiritual knowledge through Prajapita Brahma and joined the Om Mandali satsang.

Due to her simple way of sharing divine knowledge, she became known as the Goddess of Knowledge Saraswati.

BJP demands teachers for Pavagada govt schools

PAVAGADA

There are no permanent teachers in 32 schools across the taluk, causing concern over the education of children, said BJP leader Ravi during a press conference on Monday.

He alleged that many primary schools in the backward taluk are facing a shortage of teachers and demanded immediate action from the government. He said the Taluk Field Education Officer is aware of the issue and highlighted the situation at B Hosahalli where 102 children are studying without a permanent teacher.

Ravi questioned how deputed teachers could manage teaching along with other responsibilities like cooking duties. He added that some schools do not have enough teachers and even hot meal arrangements are affected due to shortages of supplies.

State BJP executive member Dr. G. Venkataramaiah said government schools are important for poor children and called for better focus on education facilities. He said children from backward communities depend on these schools and teacher shortage can harm their future.

The BJP leaders urged authorities to appoint permanent teachers soon and improve basic facilities in schools. They said education should receive priority as it plays a major role in building a stronger society. Other party members including Manjunath and Puneeth attended the press conference and supported the demand for immediate recruitment of teachers in government schools across Pavagada taluk to ensure quality learning opportunities.

Over 32,000 voter enumeration forms distributed on first day of SIR drive

CH NEWS,CHITRADURGA

The Special Intensive Revision (SIR)-2026 of electoral rolls got off to a strong start in Chitradurga district on Tuesday, with Booth Level Officers (BLOs) distributing 32,797 enumeration forms on the first day of the door-to-door verification campaign.

District Election Officer and Deputy Commissioner T. Venkatesh said the monthlong exercise, launched as per the directions of the Election Commission of India, will continue until July 29. During this period, BLOs will visit every household to distribute and collect enumeration forms to ensure the electoral rolls are accurate and up to date.

As of June 16, 2026, Chitradurga district has 14,40,534 registered voters across 1,661 polling stations. Of the 32,797 forms distributed on the first day, 2,525 have already been digitised.

Among the Assembly constituencies, Molakalmuru recorded the highest distribution with 17,558 forms, followed by Holalkere (3,910), Hosadurga (3,882), Hiriyur (3,579), Chitradurga (2,223) and Challakere (1,645).

The district administration has appealed to all eligible voters to cooperate with BLOs during the house-to-house survey and submit accurate information to facilitate timely updating of the electoral rolls.

Voters can also seek assistance from election officials if they require clarification while filling out the enumeration forms.

Every home should have a library says Manasa

MANDYA

State Kannada Book Authority President Dr. Manasa said every home should have a library as a sign of knowledge, just like a place of worship represents devotion.

She spoke after inaugurating the library for every home initia tive organized with the Kannada and Culture Department, Ka nnada Book Authority and district awareness committee at the residence of Dr. Meera Shivalingaiah in Mandya. Dr. Manasa said reading books helps people face life's challen ges and achi eve success. She ex plained that a district team is working to encourage families to build home libraries.

She recalled the message of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar about saving money for books because knowledge improves life. She said writers and readers are the two wheels of the world of literature and both are needed for progress.Dr. Meera Shivalingaiah said books create good thou ghts and develop interest among readers. She described libraries as sources of power and said they bring harmony and awareness to families.

Dr. B. Shivalingaiah said every village needs libraries and announced plans to start one in Gowdahalli village for public benefit. Sri Nischalananda Nath Swamiji said children should develop reading habits and learn from books with concentration.

HISTORIC-LEADER-HONOURED

Mandya honors Nadaprabhu Kempegowda on birth anniversary

MANDYA

The birth anniversary of Nadaprabhu Kempegowda was celebrated at Dr. B. R. Ambedkar Bhavan in Mandya with a call to follow his ideals and achievements in daily life. P. Ravikumar, MLA of Mandya assembly constituency, said Kempegowda built Bengaluru with a vision of creating a better city and society.

Speaking at the programme, organized by the district administration and Kannada and Culture Department, Ravikumar said Kempegowda's ideas of good governance and public welfare remain relevant even today. He added that his biggest dream was to install a statue of Kempegowda in Mandya district. A grant of Rs 2 crore has been released for the project, and the inauguration is expected within six months.

He also said development works including lake improvement projects are underway and efforts will continue to make Mandya a modern city. He mentioned that large funds have been provided for various development activities in the district.

District Collector Dr. Kumar said Kempegowda's contributions continue to inspire people because he was a visionary administrator and founder of Bengaluru. He created markets for traders and built lakes to support water needs and agriculture. His efforts helped Bengaluru grow as a planned city with strong foundations.

Religious leaders at the event said Kempegowda promoted public welfare and developed Bengaluru through thoughtful planning. They urged citizens to remember his values and teach younger generations about his achievements.

The programme also highlighted the importance of following his principles in modern times. Speakers said that leaders should focus on development and public service while working for society. They praised Kempegowda for his vision that transformed a small settlement into a major centre of trade and culture.

Officials including Vijayalakshmi Raghunandan, B.P. Prakash, Dr. Shobharani and other representatives attended the celebration.

The event concluded with a message that Kempegowda's ideals of leadership honesty and service should remain a guide for future generations. His legacy continues to remind everyone that dedicated work can bring positive change and create a better society when people follow the path of responsibility and unity in their everyday lives too.

QUICK READ

Mandya girl excels in postal letter contest

CH NEWS, Mandya Class 10 student Kumari Muskan R of St. Joseph Convent Girls High School, Mandya, has secured second place at the Karnataka zonal level in the Universal Postal Union's 2026 International Letter Writing Competition. Her success highlights her creativity, writing skills, and dedication. The achievement has brought pride to the school and district. The Mandya Postal Department congratulated Muskan for her excellent performance and appreciated her efforts. Officials said her accomplishment shows the importance of encouraging young students in literary activities and competitions that develop confidence and talent among children across the state and country with great enthusiasm.

Koppal Media Club hosts Press Day celebration

CH NEWS, Koppal Koppal Media Club will organize Press Day celebrations on July 1 at Smt. Bhagyamma Bheemsenappa Panaghanti Mangala Bhavan in Koppal city. Senior journalist and political analyst Honakere Nanju Ade Gowda will inaugurate the event. Club president Devu Naganura will preside over the programme, with Information Department Assistant Director Gavisiddappa Hosamani as chief guest. Ananda Baidanamane of Suvarna News will receive the Koppal Media Club Annual Award-2026. Several journalists and photographers will also be honoured for their achievements. Club members are expected to attend the celebration, organizers said in a statement.

Devanahalli JDS leaders demand action against MLA

Narayanaswamy urged responsible leaders to speak carefully, demanded an apology and legal action, and suggested the MLA's resignation

DEVANAHALLI

A protest was held in Devanahalli by JDS leaders and workers against Chikkaballapura MLA Pradeep Easwar over his remarks against former Chief Minister and Union Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy and his family. Party members said the statements were made during a public event linked to Nadaprabhu Kempegowda Jayanti and demanded action against the MLA.

Former Devanahalli MLA Nisarga Narayanaswamy and Bangalore Rural District JDS President K.V. Manjunath led the protest along with hundreds of supporters. Devanahalli Taluk President S. Mahesh chaired the programme.

Narayanaswamy said leaders holding responsible positions should be careful while speaking about others. He demanded an apology and legal action, adding that the MLA should consider resigning from his post.

K.V. Manjunath criticized Easwar and said such behavior was unacceptable from a public representative. He stated that Chikkaballapur district had a respected history and should not receive negative attention because of political disputes.

The protesters submitted a petition to Tahsildar Rajiv Lochana on behalf of the District Collector seeking strict action. Party workers raised slogans and expressed their dissatisfaction during the demonstration.

The protestors said public figures must maintain dignity and avoid statements that could create tension among people. They also appealed to leaders to respect cultural events and maintain harmony in society.

The JDS leaders highlighted the importance of responsible communication by elected representatives and said disagreements should be handled through proper democratic methods. The demonstration reflected the anger of party supporters regarding the issue and their demand for accountability.

Several taluk leaders, office bearers and activists participated in the protest. The event concluded with party members stating that they would continue to raise their concerns through lawful channels and protect the dignity of public discussions.

They said respect for leaders, communities and traditions is important for maintaining peace and unity. The incident has drawn attention to the need for careful words in political conversations. Citizens observed that democratic values require patience, dialogue and mutual respect among all sections of society.

Mangaluru South Assembly constituency SIR process launched

MANGALURU

The Special Intensive Revision (SIR) process of electoral rolls has been officially launched in the Mangaluru South Assembly constituency, marking the beginning of a large-scale voter list verification exercise in the region.

According to reports, the Election Commission's SIR initiative aims to ensure accurate and updated electoral rolls through house-to-house verification conducted by Booth Level Officers (BLOs). The process includes collecting enumeration forms, verifying voter details, and identifying duplicate or incorrect entries.

Officials stated that the exercise is part of a broader nationwide revision drive designed to strengthen the integrity of voter lists by removing errors, outdated entries, and ineligible names while ensuring that all eligible citizens are included.

During the launch in Mangaluru South, election officials explained the procedures to be followed during the enumeration phase and urged voters to cooperate with BLOs when they visit households. Political party representatives were also informed about the process and encouraged to appoint Booth Level Agents (BLAs) to assist in monitoring and ensuring transparency.

The SIR exercise will involve extensive fieldwork over the coming weeks, with officials expected to visit every household in the constituency. Citizens will be required to verify and submit their details to ensure their names are retained in the updated voter rolls.

Authorities have appealed to the public to actively participate in the revision process, stating that accurate electoral rolls are essential for free and fair elections. The process is being carried out under the supervision of the Election Commission of India as part of its structured voter list update programme.

SIR process needs care to protect rights

HANAGAL

MLA Srinivas Mane said the SIR process is not only a voter mapping exercise but also a process of preparing a new voter list. He warned that mistakes during the process could affect citizens' voting rights and create serious problems in the future.

Speaking at an awareness program organized by the taluk administration at Dr. Babu Jagjivanram Bhavan, Mane urged voters to carefully fill the enumeration forms given by BLOs and submit the required documents correctly. He said people must later check whether their names appear in the draft voter list.

He added that illiterate citizens may face confusion during the revision process and BLOs and BLAs should provide proper support. He also said changes in rules may create difficulties for people whose names are missing from the voter list.

Tahsildar Vitthal Chaugala said officials aim for complete progress in SIR work and eligible voters should not be excluded. He asked officers to work together and requested voters to cooperate by giving complete information. Other officials also attended the awareness program.

The administration explained that every eligible voter should participate actively and verify details before the final list is released. Authorities said awareness programs help avoid confusion and ensure that citizens protect their democratic rights through proper participation in the revision process with responsibility and care across the entire taluk area.

VB G RAM G scheme offers new rural employment opportunities

CHITRADURGA

The Central Government's ambitious Developed India Guarantee for Employment and Livelihood Mission (Gramin) scheme will provide 125 days of compulsory employment opportunities every year to eligible rural unskilled families, said Zilla Panchayat CEO Dr. S. Akash during a district-level training workshop held in Chitradurga on Tuesday.

Officials outlined VB G RAM G implementation plans, focusing on rural infrastructure, employment, scheme procedures, financial systems, audits, technology, and permitted works

The workshop was organized for implementing officers, PDOs and technical staff to explain the process and objectives of the new VB G RAM G scheme before its launch across the district from July 1.

Under the scheme, rural adult members who voluntarily apply for unskilled work can receive guaranteed employment for 125 days in a financial year. The initiative aims to strengthen administration and increase citizen participation through a modern digital system. Officials said special arrangements have been planned to ensure availability of agricultural workers during important farming seasons.

Zilla Panchayat Deputy Secretary M. Babu said a proper framework has been prepared for successful implementation of VB G RAM G and suggested that officers should focus on creating useful infrastructure along with providing jobs to rural communities.

Master trainer Abdul Nazir Saab from Mysore provided details about the scheme's rules and procedures. Chitradurga officials explained the objectives, institutional structure and various stages of the project process. Other trainers guided participants about financial systems, social audits, technology use and permitted works under the programme.

The training session helped officers understand their responsibilities and prepare for smooth implementation of the employment scheme. The programme highlighted that the mission will support rural families by creating work opportunities and improving local development activities.

Officials said the scheme will also promote transparency and accountability through digital monitoring methods. The district administration requested all concerned departments to work together for effective execution and ensure that benefits reach eligible people in villages.

The workshop was attended by taluk panchayat officers, PDOs coordinators and other staff members from different departments. District IEC Coordinator M.S. Ravindranath coordinated the programme and helped in conducting the event successfully. The officials expressed confidence that the new initiative would improve livelihood support and strengthen rural communities across Chitradurga.

Public meeting held on SIR awareness campaign

SHIVAMOGGA

A public meeting was held in Shivamogga to create awareness regarding the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, with speakers raising concerns over its implementation and alleging political motives behind the exercise.

Addressing the gathering, former minister Madhu Bangarappa claimed that the central government led by the BJP was attempting to misuse the SIR process for its own advantage. He said such concerns needed to be addressed collectively to safeguard democratic values and ensure that voter rights are not compromised.

The meeting focused on creating awareness among citizens about the ongoing voter list revision exercise being carried out by the Election Commission. Speakers explained that Booth Level Officers (BLOs) are visiting

households to collect enumeration forms and verify voter details as part of the SIR process.

Concerns were also expressed about the transparency of the exercise, with participants urging vigilance to ensure that eligible voters are not excluded during the revision. Leaders at the meeting stressed the importance of community participation in monitoring the process and supporting Booth Level Agents (BLAs) appointed by political parties.

Madhu Bangarappa alleged that the BJP government at the Centre had "ulterior motives" behind the SIR initiative and called for strong public awareness campaigns to counter any potential misuse. He urged party workers and citizens to remain alert and ensure that no eligible voter is removed from the electoral rolls unfairly.

Other speakers at the meeting echoed similar concerns and emphasized the need for careful scrutiny during the voter verification process. They said that while electoral roll revision is a routine administrative exercise, it must be conducted in a transparent and impartial manner. Party workers and local leaders also participated in the discussion, highlighting the need to educate voters about their rights and the importance of correctly filling out enumeration forms. They said awareness at the grassroots level would play a key role in ensuring fair implementation of the SIR process.

The meeting concluded with a call for continued public engagement and monitoring of the voter list revision exercise across Shivamogga district.

The Disappearing Lakes of Bengaluru: A City Losing Its Lifeline

HEPSIBA.S, CH NEWS

Kempe Gowda envisioned Bengaluru, he recognised that a growing city could survive only with a strong and sustainable water management system. Nearly 1,000 interconnected man-made tanks, linked through an extensive network of rajakaluves (stormwater drains), were designed to harvest rainwater, prevent flooding and naturally recharge groundwater aquifers. These tanks once worked as a single, interconnected ecosystem, ensuring water security for the city. Today, however, much of that vision has been lost as many tanks have disappeared due to encroachment, construction debris, pollution and unscientific restoration, leaving Bengaluru to grapple with recurring water shortages and declining groundwater levels.

Ms. Noor Fathima, an environmentalist, explained that these water bodies are historically "tanks," not natural lakes, decades of encroachment, construction debris and poor urban planning have disrupted this centuries-old network, resulting in falling groundwater levels and increasing dependence on borewells. She said many restoration projects have failed because they ignore the ecological functions of these tanks.

When asked if urbanisation is the main reason for the disappearance of Bengaluru's tanks, Ms. Noor Fathima said the increasing pressure on land and water resources has been a major factor driving their decline.

Criticising the way some restoration works are carried out, Ms. Fathima said, "People come in the name of cleaning the lakes, but are only making money out of it. Very little is actually being done for the people's good or for the ecosystem." She argued that excessive desilting, cementing lake beds and other unscientific interventions often damage the natural environment instead of restoring it.

She emphasised that conservation must begin with the younger generation, urging schools and families to reconnect children with nature. "Children need to understand the value of trees, soil and water from an early age," she said, adding that environmental awareness and hands-on exposure to natural ecosystems are essential to building a generation that will protect, rather than exploit, the environment.

As Bengaluru faces recurring water shortages and declining groundwater levels, Ms. Fathima believes that protecting the city's historic tank system is no longer just an environmental concern but a necessity for ensuring the city's long-term water security.

VILLAGE-DEVELOPMENT-DRIVE

Sandur MLA launches Rs 11 crore development works

BALLARI

Twenty one development works worth Rs 11.12 crore were launched in Sandur assembly constituency on Tuesday by MLA Annapurna E. Tukaram through Bhoomi Puja ceremonies held across different villages. The projects were supported by departments including Public Works Department, Panchayat Raj Engineering Department, Karnataka Rural Infrastructure Development Corporation and NMDC.

The works include roads, CC roads, drainage systems, school

rooms, Gram Panchayat buildings, bus stands, tourist facilities, health staff hostels, godowns, Shaadi Mahals and high mast lights. The foundation stones were laid in Ankammmanal village for CC road and drainage works in Scheduled Tribe colonies. The new bus stand was also opened for public use. In Hiral village, two new classrooms for Government Lower Primary School were inaugurated and road development between Hiral-Bandri was started.

In Kalingeri village, works under Akshara Avishkar scheme including school rooms and a new Gram Panchayat building were launched along with road improvement and high mast light installation in nearby areas. In Sovenahalli and other villages, CC road and drainage projects were started for colonies along with lighting facilities. Construction works were also launched in Vaderahalli village for roads and school rooms. Additional projects included a tourist shrine in Chora nur village, a godown, primary health centre staff hostel, Shaadi Mahal and Hosur road development.

Speaking at the event, MLA Annapurna E. Tukaram said the government is giving priority to rural infrastructure development and ensuring basic facilities such as roads, education, health and drinking water reach every village. She added that these projects would improve living conditions and support local growth by strengthening essential services across the constituency.

Walkathon creates awareness about voter list revision

KOPPAL

The district administration organized a walkathon in Koppal to create awareness about the Special Intensive Revision of voter lists for 2026. Deputy Commissioner Dr. Suresh B. Itnal appealed to all citizens to participate in the process and provide correct information.

He spoke after inaugurating the awareness march organized by the District SWEEP Committee near the Koppal city tourist temple on Tuesday.

Dr. Itnal said Booth Level Officers will visit every house from June 30 to July 29 to verify voter details. Citizens should fill the SIR application forms, sign them and submit the required documents to ensure their names remain correctly recorded in the voter list.

He explained that the revision process will include checking details, correcting mistakes, adding names of eligible voters and removing names of deceased or shifted persons. He said the cooperation of voters is important to prepare an accurate electoral roll. Zilla Panchayat Chief Executive Officer Varnit Negi said citizens must follow Election Commission guidelines and support the SIR process.

QUICK READ

Race against time as 4-year-old falls into 220-ft-deep borewell

Ambala

A massive multi-agency rescue operation is underway in Haryana's Ambala district after a four-year-old boy slipped into a 220-foot-deep open borewell on Tuesday morning. A race against time is underway by the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), State Disaster Response Force (SDRF), district administration, and the Indian Army to save the child. The child, identified as Nirbhay, fell into the approximately nine-inch-wide borewell in Dhanaura village under Barara around 6.30 a.m. while accompanying his father to the family's agricultural fields, officials said.

July 21 Martyrs Day rally will not be allowed in old place

Kolkata

The annual 'Martyrs' Day' rally of Trinamool Congress will not be allowed this time at the old and traditional venue in front of CESC House at the busy Esplanade crossing in central Kolkata, the police on Tuesday informed both factions of the party. Both factions -- one led by former West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and her nephew, Abhishek Banerjee and the other led by the expelled party legislator, Ritabrata Banerjee -- have sought police permission to conduct the rally separately at the old and traditional venue. However, on Monday, it was informed by the city police that neither of the two Trinamool Congress factions would be allowed to hold the gatherings during the busy hours on a working day at that prime crossing point in the heart of the city.

Twisha death case: mother-in-law's judicial custody extended

Bhopal

A special court on Tuesday extended the judicial custody of retired judge Giribala Singh and her son Samarth Singh, the two accused in the death case of model-actress Twisha Sharma, till July 14. Both accused were produced before the court through video conferencing from Bhopal Central Jail. The court passed the order after the expiry of their earlier judicial remand. Following the hearing, both were directed to remain in judicial custody till the next date of hearing. The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), which is probing the case, did not seek further custodial interrogation of the accused.

Uddhav camp suffers setback as Ahir joins Shinde Sena

Ahir, a close aide of Aaditya Thackeray, filed his nomination for the election to the post of deputy chairman of Maha Legislative Council as Mahayuti candidate.

MUMBAI

A major political development unfolded in Maharashtra after senior legislator Sachin Ahir formally resigned from all his responsibilities within Shiv Sena (Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray) immediately after filing his nomination papers for the post of Deputy Chairperson of the Maharashtra Legislative Council.

Ahir's move marks another significant setback for the Uddhav Thackeray-led faction as he officially joined the Shiv Sena led by Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde.

In his resignation letter addressed to Uddhav Thackeray, Ahir expressed gratitude to the party leadership for entrusting him with important responsibilities over the years. He stated that he was stepping down from his positions as General Secretary of the Bharatiya Kamgar Sena and

President of the Brihanmumbai BEST Kamgar Sena due to unavoidable circumstances. He requested that his resignation be accepted while conveying his best wishes for the future of the party.

Ahir's departure is considered politically significant because of his long-standing influence in Mumbai's labour unions and working-class politics.

As the head of prominent trade unions, he commanded considerable support among workers and played a vital role in strengthening the party's urban presence. His exit is expected to weaken the Thackeray faction's organisational strength in Mumbai, where labour politics continues to hold considerable electoral importance.

Political observers believe changing political realities within the Maha Vikas Aghadi alliance influenced Ahir's decision.

Many analysts suggest that concerns over his future political prospects prompted him to align with the ruling Mahayuti alliance, where he is expected to receive greater opportunities.

Speculation regarding the Shiv Sena candidate for the Deputy Chairperson's post had been widespread until Ahir unexpectedly appeared to file his nomination. The nomination process took place in the presence of Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, former Deputy Chairperson Neelam Gorhe, and State Minister Chandrakant Patil, highlighting the importance of the occasion.

Shiv Sena minister and party spokesperson Sanjay Shirsat clarified that Ahir's move was not merely a temporary political arrangement for the election but represented his formal induction into the Shinde-led Shiv Sena. According to Shirsat, Ahir had officially joined the party and would now play an active role within the organisation.

Before making his decision public, Ahir reportedly contacted Aaditya Thackeray and personally explained the reasons behind his departure. His close association with Aaditya had made him one of the most trusted leaders in the Thackeray camp, making his resignation particularly significant from a political standpoint.

Patna court extends Khan Sir's interim protection till July 3

PATNA

Faisal Khan, popularly known as Khan Sir, received interim relief from the Patna Civil Court on Tuesday in connection with the ongoing legal dispute involving educator Roshan Anand.

While hearing his anticipatory bail plea, the court extended protection from any coercive action, including arrest, until July 3. The court adjourned further proceedings to July 3 after seeking additional documents from the investigating authorities.

During the hearing, the court directed the police to submit an updated case diary related to the incident and a verification report on the arms licences of Faisal Khan's personal bodyguards.

The court observed that further consideration of the anticipatory bail application would take place only after these documents are placed on record.

The DG stressed upon the importance of synergy and coordinated efforts to ensure a safe and secure Yatra for all devotees.

BSF DG Kumar reviews security arrangements for Amarnath Yatra

JAMMU

The Border Security Force (BSF) on Tuesday conducted a comprehensive review of security and logistical preparations ahead of the annual Shri Amarnath Yatra, which is scheduled to begin on July 3.

Senior officials stated that all necessary arrangements have been completed to ensure the smooth, safe, and successful conduct of the two-month-long pilgrimage to the revered Amarnath cave shrine in Jammu and Kashmir.

Border Security Force Director General Praveen Kumar, accompanied by senior officers, visited several key locations along the pilgrimage route to assess the operational readiness of security personnel. During the inspection, he reviewed disaster response mechanisms, mountain rescue capabilities, medical assistance for pilgrims, anti-sabotage measures, and overall coordination among various security agencies and civil authorities.

The Director General emphasized the importance of close cooperation and effective coordination between all agencies involved in managing the pilgrimage. He instructed officials to remain vigilant and maintain seamless communication to provide a secure environment for thousands of devotees expected to undertake the journey to the shrine, located at an altitude of approximately 3,880 metres.

The Border Security Force, which is primarily responsible for guarding India's border with Pakistan, plays a crucial role in ensuring the safety of pilgrims throughout the annual religious event. Security arrangements have been significantly strengthened considering the challenging terrain and the large number of visitors expected during the pilgrimage season.

As part of the final preparations, security personnel conducted a full-scale dry run along the pilgrimage route on Monday. The exercise was designed to evaluate convoy movement, emergency response procedures, deployment strategies, and overall security preparedness before the official commencement of the Yatra.

NEET reforms: Kerala Assembly passes resolution

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The Assembly unanimously backed sweeping examination reforms, urging stronger safeguards and greater transparency in national entrance tests nationwide.

The Kerala Assembly on Tuesday passed a resolution urging the Central government to undertake comprehensive reforms of the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET) and the country's overall national examination system.

The resolution received support from both the ruling United Democratic Front (UDF) and the opposition Left Democratic Front (LDF), while amendments proposed by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) were rejected by the House.

The resolution was introduced by Higher Education Minister Roji M. John under Rule 118 and highlighted growing concerns over the credibility of national entrance examinations. It pointed to repeated allegations of question paper leaks, examination irregularities, administrative lapses, technical failures, and shortcomings in the evaluation and publication of results. According to the Assembly, these recurring issues have weakened public confidence in the fairness, transparency, and reliability of the country's examination system.

The BJP legislature party, which has three members in the 140-member Assembly, proposed amendments requesting that the resolution acknowledge the action taken by the Central government against individuals allegedly responsible for examination-related irregularities. BJP member V. Muraleedharan argued that the Centre had responded promptly after the controversies emerged and that its efforts deserved recognition in the final text.

However, the proposed amendments were put to a vote and defeated by the Assembly. Following their rejection, the original resolution was adopted with the combined support of the Congress-led UDF and the Communist Party of India (Marxist)-led LDF. The UDF currently holds 102 seats in the Assembly, while the LDF has 35 members.

The resolution stated that repeated controversies surrounding NEET have created widespread anxiety among students and parents across the country. It observed that years of hard work by millions of aspirants, including students from Kerala, have been jeopardized by examination malpractices and administrative shortcomings. The Assembly maintained that such failures conflict with the constitutional principles of equal opportunity and social justice.

The resolution also noted that similar concerns have emerged in several other national-level examinations conducted by the National Testing Agency, including undergraduate entrance examinations and research eligibility tests.

In addition, it referred to recruitment examinations conducted by agencies such as the Staff Selection Commission and the Railway Recruitment Board, stating that repeated controversies indicate deeper structural and administrative weaknesses within the national examination framework.

FDA suspends licences of 6 eateries for unhygienic kitchens, expired food

MUMBAI

The Maharashtra Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has suspended the food business licences of six restaurants and eateries, including a prominent restaurant here after inspections revealed unhygienic kitchens, expired food stock and misbranded products, according to multiple reports.

The action was taken against Flint & Waarsa in Nariman Point and five other establishments, including hotels, restaurants and a bakery located in Borivali, Santacruz, Andheri, Bandra and Bhandup, as part of a special statewide enforcement drive.

As per FDA, officials inspected Flint & Waarsa on June 27 and found misbranded food products, following which five samples were collected for laboratory analysis.

The inspection team also seized stock worth Rs 11,350 and destroyed expired food items valued at Rs 16,201 that had been stored beyond their shelf life. Moreover, during raids conducted at the other establishments, officials found unhygienic kitchen conditions, including the presence of cockroaches and rats, improper storage of raw food and inadequate refrigeration facilities.

It alsofound that some establishments lacked mandatory documentation, while food handlers had not undergone the required health check-ups. Authorities further noted the absence of a proper mechanism to address customer complaints.

The food business licences of all six establishments were suspended over serious violations related to hygiene, food safety and regulatory compliance, the department said.

BJP prez Nabin urges Telangana BJP cadres to take people's issues to streets

HYDERABAD

BJP national president Nitin Nabin on Tuesday called on the party cadres in Telangana to gear up to take people's issues to the streets to bring the party to power in the state in 2028.

Addressing the party's state executive meeting on the last day of his three-day visit to Telangana, he told the party leaders that if a change is to be brought in Telangana, they have to raise people's voice on the streets.

He exuded confidence that if party leaders become the voice of the people, 2028 will belong to them and to the BJP.

Stating that the BJP showed its strong presence in Telangana by securing 35 per cent of the votes in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, he urged the party workers to engage in even greater struggles in the years ahead.

He claimed that the overwhelming support of the people and the enthusiasm of BJP karyakartas sent a clear message that strong public support for the BJP is steadily growing across Telangana.

He recalled that out of the two MPs the BJP had in 1984, one was from Telangana. Telangana is the state where we made our 'lotus' bloom in the very early days. I believe that if our governments are currently functioning in 22 states across the country, it is because the people are ready to move forward under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, he said.

He stated that the party makes its achievements poll issues and not just the weaknesses of the Congress party. "We highlight the change that has come in the country during the last 12 years. I believe the USP of our government is precisely this: we deliver on what we promise. On the contrary, Congress never fulfils its promises."

He claimed that under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the government is working for Telangana as well. He said PM Modi had shown concern for the state's farmers. More than 30 lakh farmers are benefiting from the PM Kisan Samman Yojana, and over 33 lakh Kisan Credit Cards have been issued.

He cited the turmeric board set up in Nizamabad and highlighted the number of beneficiaries in Telangana under schemes like Ayushman Bharat. He slammed the Congress government for failure to fulfil even one of six guarantees in the last three years.

Entrepreneurship key to Meghalaya's economic transformation: Conrad Sangma

SHILLONG

Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma on Tuesday said entrepreneurship is the foundation of sustainable economic growth and livelihood generation as he launched the state government's Achievers of the Month programme to recognise outstanding individuals and inspire more people to take up entrepreneurial ventures.

Launching the flagship initiative in Shillong, the CM said the government's role is to create an enabling ecosystem through policies, infrastructure and institutional support, but it is entrepreneurs who ultimately drive economic progress.

Government creates the base, but it is entrepreneurship that makes the economy take off, CM Sangma said, describing entrepreneurship as the bedrock of sustainable livelihood generation and long-term economic development.

He said the initiative seeks to create a platform where achievers from diverse sectors can share their journeys, inspire others and demonstrate how government interventions have helped transform ideas into successful enterprises.

Announcing that July will be observed as a dedicated month for entrepreneurs, the Chief Minister said the government will organise storytelling sessions, public engagements and social media campaigns to showcase entrepreneurial success stories from across Meghalaya.

BLACKOUTS IGNITES STORM

Mumbai blackouts ignite political storm in Maha Assembly, Speaker steps in

MUMBAI

The worsening power crisis in South and Central Mumbai triggered a major political storm in the Maharashtra State Assembly on Tuesday, with legislators across party lines strongly confronting the government over recurring power outages lasting from eight to 12 hours.

Facing a united attack from both the ruling and Opposition benches, Assembly Speaker Rahul Narwekar took serious note of the situation and convened an emergency joint meeting to seek immediate accountability from the Brihanmumbai Electric Supply and Transport (BEST) undertaking and press for a permanent solution to the issue.

Expressing deep displeasure over the prolonged blackouts, Speaker Narwekar sharply snubbed BEST management, stating that persistent power network failures severely tarnish the reputation of Mumbai as India's commercial and financial capital. The Speaker criticised the utility for failing to preemptively upgrade its infrastructure to withstand the increased thermal stress brought on by climate change and global warming.

The Speaker criticised the utility for failing to preemptively upgrade its infrastructure to withstand the increased thermal stress brought on by climate change and global warming

He remarked that the upgradation and strengthening of the distribution network should have been taken well in advance and directed BEST officials to provide its roadmap to improve power supply in the future.

The Speaker also asked BEST to submit the report on various measures taken to resolve the technical fault and the response time taken in call centres. He has summoned an urgent meeting of the city's elected representatives, the BEST general manager, Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) commissioner, senior utility officers, and state government officials at Vidhan Bhawan, directing the administration to present a comprehensive, time-bound roadmap to fix the grid.

The legislative showdown erupted during a heated discussion on a Call Attention Motion jointly moved by Congress MLA Amin Patel (Mumbadevi) and Bharatiya Janata Party MLA Captain R Tamil Selvan (Sion Koliwada).

Selvan demanded immediate, effective steps from the administration, emphasising that ordinary citizens and small businesses are facing massive financial and physical losses due to unannounced distribution failures.

Congress' Patel launched a stinging attack on the top management's absolute apathy, alleging that neither the BEST general manager nor senior engineers bother to answer phone calls from public representatives during prolonged blackouts.

NIA arrests TMC councillor Ali in 2023 Ram Navami violence case

Sakir Ali, husband of former Arambagh TMC MP Aparupa Poddar, is accused of inciting clashes and orchestrating targeted violence in Rishra of Hooghly during the religious rituals.

KOLKATA

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Tuesday arrested Trinamool Congress councillor Shakir Ali in connection with its investigation into the violence that erupted during a Ram Navami procession in Rishra, located in West Bengal's Hooghly district, in 2023. The arrest marks a significant development in the probe into the communal unrest that took place during the religious procession and had drawn widespread political attention.

According to officials, the case was initially registered following reports of violence and disturbances during the Ram Navami procession in Rishra. Considering the seriousness of the incident, the investigation was later transferred to the National Investigation Agency for a detailed probe into the circumstances surrounding the violence and the alleged involvement of various individuals.

Acting on the investigation, NIA officials, accompanied by personnel from the Central Reserve Police Force, conducted a search operation at Shakir Ali's residence in Rishra on Tuesday morning. Ali, who serves as the elected councillor for Ward Number Four of the Rishra Municipality, was present at his home during the operation and was subsequently taken into custody by the investigating agency.

The arrival of central investigation officials and security personnel attracted a large number of local residents, who gathered outside the councillor's residence as the operation was underway. Shortly afterward, confirmation emerged that Ali had been formally arrested in connection with the case.

The Bharatiya Janata Party has previously alleged that the violence during the Ram Navami procession had been carried out at the instigation of Shakir Ali. The Trinamool Congress has consistently rejected such allegations. The NIA has not publicly disclosed further details regarding the specific evidence leading to the councillor's arrest, and the investigation remains ongoing.

Shakir Ali is also the husband of former Trinamool Congress Member of Parliament Aparupa Poddar, who represented the constituency for two consecutive terms. The party did not nominate her for the 2024 parliamentary elections, following which she publicly expressed disappointment, claiming that financial considerations had influenced the ticket distribution process. Despite her criticism, she announced that she would continue to remain associated with the Trinamool Congress as a dedicated party worker.

QUICK READ

SC refuses to hear PIL seeking probe into Bhojpur encounter

New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Tuesday declined to entertain a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) seeking a court-monitored probe into the alleged 'fake' encounter killing of Bharat Bhushan Tiwari in Bihar's Bhojpur district and raising concerns over the growing trend of extra-judicial killings and half encounters. A Bench of Justices M.M. Sundresh and Sheel Nagu questioned the maintainability of the plea under Article 32 of the Constitution and asked the petitioner to pursue appropriate remedies before the jurisdictional High Court. During the hearing, advocate Vishal Tiwari, appearing as petitioner-in-person, submitted that the incident was serious and that similar petitions concerning encounter killings were already pending before the apex court.

Asaram rape case: SC issues notice to Rajasthan govt

New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Tuesday issued notice to the Rajasthan government on a plea filed by self-styled godman Asaram challenging the Rajasthan High Court judgment upholding his conviction and life sentence in the 2013 minor rape case. A Bench of Justices M.M. Sundresh and Sheel Nagu sought the response of the Rajasthan government on Asaram's special leave petition (SLP) against the May 27 judgment of the Rajasthan High Court. During the hearing, senior counsel appearing for Asaram also sought his immediate release on medical grounds, citing his advanced age and deteriorating health. However, the apex court declined to grant any interim relief at this stage, observing that it would first hear the Rajasthan government's stand before considering the prayer for suspension of sentence.

Mayawati calls Ram temple embezzlement case concerning

New Delhi

Former Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister and Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) chief, Mayawati, on Tuesday reacted to reports of alleged irregularities involving offerings at the Shri Ram Temple in Ayodhya, calling the matter extremely serious and concerning while urging a transparent and accountable system for managing temple donations. In a post on X, Mayawati said, The theft of offerings from the Shri Ram Temple in Ayodhya, along with embezzlement and tampering, and the various kinds of reports that keep surfacing day after day in the media about such acts, are extremely serious and concerning. People like this should absolutely not be spared, but politicising this matter is also not right. She further stressed the need for systemic reforms in managing temple offerings to prevent recurrence of such allegations, suggesting that best practices from other major temples across the country should be adopted.

HC seeks report from cops on action taken after egg attacks on politicians

KOLKATA

A division bench of the Calcutta High Court, on Tuesday, directed the West Bengal Police to submit a report on the actions taken by the police administration in the incidents of eggs being thrown at political leaders and workers in the state since the results of the recently concluded Assembly elections were declared on June 4.

The division bench of the High Court's Acting Chief Justice Tapabrata Chakraborty and Justice Partha Sarathi Chatterjee gave this direction to the state police after hearing on public interest litigation (PIL) filed by the Trinamool Congress.

In the PIL, the petitioners accused the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) activists of throwing eggs towards Trinamool Congress leaders, including former and present elected public representatives from the party, in the presence of the police, with the cops remaining mute spectators during those egg attacks.

Hul Diwas: Jharkhand pays tribute to heroes of historic Santhal rebellion

RANCHI

Jharkhand observed Hul Diwas on Tuesday with tributes to the legendary freedom fighters Sidhu Murmu and Kanhu Murmu, who led the historic Santhal Hul rebellion against British colonial rule in 1855. The annual observance commemorates one of India's earliest and most significant tribal uprisings, which is remembered for its fearless resistance against oppression and exploitation.

Chief Minister Hemant Soren, Leader of Opposition Babulal Marandi, and several political leaders paid floral tributes to the martyrs at Sidhu-Kanhu Park in Ranchi. Similar commemorative events were organised across the state, while thousands of people gathered at Bhognadih village in Sahibganj district, the birthplace of the historic uprising, to honour the sacrifices of the tribal revolutionaries.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Minister Hemant Soren described Hul Diwas as much more than a historical remembrance. He said it represents the enduring spirit of resistance against injustice, oppression, and exploitation. According to the Chief Minister, the rebellion demonstrated extraordinary courage at a time when marginalized communities had very limited means to challenge colonial authority.

Soren recalled the contributions of Sidhu Murmu, Kanhu Murmu, Chand Murmu, Bairab Murmu, and the courageous women freedom fighters Phulo Murmu and Jhano Murmu. He said these leaders united the Santhal community and fearlessly launched a movement against British rule without considering the personal consequences of their actions. Their struggle, he noted, continues to inspire movements across the world that seek justice, equality, and the protection of the rights of weaker sections of society.

Describing Jharkhand as a land of brave heroes, the Chief Minister said the sacrifices of the state's legendary leaders would always occupy a place of honour in history. In a message shared on social media, he remarked that the spirit of revolution can never be extinguished and compared it to the eternal flames that symbolize the nation's respect for its heroes.

Leader of Opposition Babulal Marandi also paid homage to the martyrs and highlighted the historical significance of the Santhal Hul movement. He said the uprising, which began in the Santhal Pargana region in 1855, emerged as a massive revolt against the exploitative policies of British colonial administration and the injustice faced by tribal communities.

Marandi emphasized that the movement was led by Sidhu Murmu, Kanhu Murmu, Chand Murmu, Bairab Murmu, Phulo Murmu, and Jhano Murmu, who fought courageously to protect their land, forests, water resources, cultural identity, and traditional rights. He stated that the rebellion not only challenged colonial rule but also became a powerful symbol of freedom, self-respect, and social justice.

The leaders agreed that the sacrifices made by the Hul martyrs continue to inspire present and future generations to defend their constitutional rights, preserve their cultural heritage, and stand united against injustice. Hul Diwas remains a significant occasion in Jharkhand, reflecting the state's deep respect for the courage and legacy of the Santhal freedom fighters whose struggle occupies a distinguished place in India's freedom movement.

Ex-bank manager, pvt firm CMD get 7-year RI for housing loan fraud

CHENNAI

A special Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) court in Chennai sentenced a former senior bank official, and a private company chief to seven years of rigorous imprisonment in a bank fraud case involving the fraudulent sanction and disbursement of housing loans.

The scam caused a loss of more than Rs 5.29 crore to a public sector bank, Central Bank of India, the agency said on Tuesday.

The court also slapped a fine on the private firm in connection with the case.

The court on Monday convicted and sentenced Deepak V Menon, then Senior Manager of the Central Bank of India's Triplicane branch in Chennai, to seven years of rigorous imprisonment along with a fine of Rs 65,000.

The court also sentenced B Sivaganesan, Chief Managing Director of Sree Sasthru Associates Kadanthetti Pvt Ltd, to seven years of rigorous imprisonment and imposed a fine of Rs 1.17 lakh. The company was also fined Rs 26,000 in the case.

The case was registered by the CBI on April 29, 2009, following a complaint from the Central Bank of India. In the complaint, it was alleged that 28 housing loans were fraudulently sanctioned and disbursed between 2006 and 2007 on the basis of forged and fabricated documents.

During the investigation, the CBI found that the fraudulent transactions resulted in outstanding dues exceeding Rs 5.29 crore as of February 2010.After completing the probe, the agency filed a charge sheet on June 30, 2010, against four accused, including bank official Menon, Sivaganesan, the company, and a private individual, S Vaidyanathan.

During the course of the trial, Vaidyanathan died, and the proceedings against him were abated.

After examining the evidence and hearing the arguments, the special CBI court found the remaining accused guilty and awarded the sentences.

Maharashtra TET paper leak: Mastermind's wife arrested

PATNA

The investigation into the alleged Maharashtra Teacher Eligibility Test (TET) paper leak has gathered pace with the arrest of Suman Kumari, the wife of the alleged mastermind, Bijendra Gupta, from Patna.

Police are questioning her over her suspected role in the examination paper leak and related financial transactions.

According to information shared by the Maharashtra Police and Patna Police sources, Suman Kumari was arrested in Patna and is currently being interrogated.

Investigators suspect that Suman Kumari played a role in handling financial transactions linked to the alleged paper leak operation.

Police also believe she remained in contact with her husband, Bijendra Gupta, and other members of the alleged network after the TET question paper was leaked.

Her interrogation is expected to help investigators trace the flow of money and identify other individuals connected to the case.

Before Suman Kumari's arrest, Maharashtra Police had taken three other accused, Rajiv Shah and Akash Kumar from Patna, and Dheeraj Kumar from Panipat, Haryana, into custody.

According to investigators, interrogation of these three accused pointed to Bijendra Gupta as the alleged mastermind behind the operation.

Police teams are conducting raids in Bihar, Delhi, Haryana, and Agra to apprehend Bijendra Gupta, who is originally from Sherpur village under the Vidyapati police station area of Samastipur district in Bihar.

Investigators believe he played a central role in organising the alleged paper leak network.

Bijendra Gupta's father, Baleshwar Gupta, said the family had lost contact with him years ago after he left the village for further studies in Begusarai.

Digital promotion of tourism: MoT signs MoU with Google

NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Tourism on Tuesday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Google India to strengthen the digital promotion of India's tourism destinations through the use of digital technologies, artificial intelligence, data-driven insights and capacity building.

The MoU was exchanged in the presence of Union Minister for Tourism and Culture Gajendra Singh Shekhawat in New Delhi.

The MoU establishes a framework for collaboration between the ministry and Google India in key areas including digital tourism promotion, knowledge sharing, capacity building and the use of emerging technologies for enhancing visitor engagement.

The partnership will leverage Google's expertise across its digital ecosystem to strengthen the visibility of India's tourism destinations, experiences and cultural heritage among domestic and international travellers.

The collaboration is non-commercial, non-binding and non-exclusive, with no financial implications for either side. The event was attended by Secretary (Tourism) Bhuvnesh Kumar, Additional Secretary and Director General (Tourism) Suman Billa and other senior officials.

Speaking on the occasion, Shekhawat said, "Digital technologies have the potential to create immersive experiences that can showcase the glory and grandeur of India's cultural sites to audiences across the world. By harnessing cutting-edge digital technologies, we can transform the way travellers discover, experience and engage with India's rich cultural and natural heritage."

The minister said that the collaboration reflects the ministry's commitment to adopting innovative, technology-driven approaches to tourism promotion under the Incredible India initiative.

As part of the collaboration, Google's insights will be leveraged for global travel trends, traveller behaviour and digital engagement patterns to support evidence-based tourism promotion strategies.

KKRTC CIVIL DIVISION, KALABURAGI
MSK Mill Road, Jewargi Cross Kalaburagi.

No: KKT/EEG/KLB/DB/ 254 /2026-27 Date: 30/06/2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION NO. 07&08/2026-27

Through GOK e-procurement platform WWW.kppp.karnataka.gov.in

Eligible Class-I Civil Contractors/Firms registered in Karnataka at KPWD/CPWD /MES are hereby invited for the below works in Two cover system through E-procurement portal mode.

Sl No	Name of work	Amount put to Tender (Rs in lakhs)	Last date for receipt of tenders
1	Construction of Civil Infrastructure works for 100 Buses under PM-e Bus Seva Scheme for existing kalaburagi Depot no-4	432.00	20-07-2026
2	Construction of New Bus Depot for 50 Buses under PM-e Bus Seva scheme at Vijayapur	1108.00	20-07-2026

The tender schedule will be available after 03-07-2026 on the website mentioned as below. **www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in** Telephone No. 08472-220663

Sd/-
Executive Engineer

DIPR/Kalaburagi/274/KSMC&A/2026-27

Deputy Director & Ex-Officio Samagra Shikshana Karantaka Kolar District, Kolar

No: SSK/KGBV/Food Supply/2026-27 Date: 20.06.2026

Publication of Short Term E-Tender

Regarding subject and reference, short term E-Tender has been invited by the agencies for supply of food to 3 KGBV schools and 3 girls hostels in Kolar district under Comprehensive Education Campaign scheme for the year 2026-27 for more information **http://kppp.karanatka.gov.in** can be viewed.

Sl. No.	Activities	Last Date for	Website
1	3 KGBV & 3 Girls Hostel Food supply	Date: 06.07.2026 upto 4-00 P.M	http://kppp.karnatka.gov.in

Sd/- Deputy Director & Ex-Officio Samagra Shikshana Karantaka, Kolara District, Kolara

DIPR/KOLAR/RO:134/KSMCA/2026-27

BENGALURU NORTH CITY CORPORATION
Office of the Executive Engineer, Special Division, Amruthahalli Main Road, Byatarayanapura, Bengaluru-560 092.

No.: BNCC/EE/SD/TEND/09/2026-27 Dated: 29.06.2026

INVITATION FOR TENDER (IFT)

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal only)
(Two Cover System)

The Executive Engineer, Special Division, BNCC invites tenders from eligible registered agencies in any state Govt. Organization for providing services mentioned in the Table below.

Sl. No.	Name of the projects
1	Providing Fencing work for parking of abandoned vehicles @ Sy. No. 99, Kogilu Village in BNCC Limits. **EMD (Rs.): Rs. 37,500/-, Estimated Amount: Rs. 15.00 Lakhs.**

Calendar of Events: (1) Tender documents may be downloaded from the KPPP portal of The Government of Karnataka. **(2)** Last date & time for Queries (only through online): **02.07.2026** upto **4:00 p.m. (3)** Date and time of per-bid meeting: **02.07.2026** upto **3:00 p.m. (4)** Last Date & Time for receipt of Tenders: **07.07.2026 upto 4:00 p.m. (5)** Opening of Technical bid: **08.07.2026** at **4:30 p.m.** if possible next working day. **(6)** Opening of Financial bid (If Possible): **09.07.2026** at **11:00 a.m.** Further details may be obtained from the above office, during office hours or website **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.**

Sd/- Executive Engineer, Special Division, BNCC

CH CLASSIFIEDS
To place a classified ad contact: **080-41209042**

QUICK READ

'Anti-migrant politics spark resurgence of racism'

LONDON

After nearly four decades in Britain, Ali Haydor says there are now days when he wishes he could hide his brown skin. Violent protests erupted in his home city of Southampton after a British-born Sikh, who falsely accused his white victim of a racist attack, was jailed for murder. A video of police handcuffing his dying victim, released alongside the man's sentencing on June 1, sparked outrage and cross-party calls to scrap police guidance on differing treatment by ethnicity. A week later, gangs of masked men went door to door seeking out migrants after a white man in Belfast was stabbed multiple times.

Iran Denies Planned Talks Despite Renewed Doha Diplomatic Efforts

Iran rejected reports of imminent negotiations with the United States despite renewed diplomatic activity surrounding the fragile ceasefire agreement.

DOHA

Fresh uncertainty has emerged over diplomatic efforts to ease tensions between Iran and the United States after Tehran denied that any direct negotiations were scheduled this week, despite reports that delegations from both countries were expected to travel to Doha. The conflicting statements have highlighted the fragile nature of the interim ceasefire that has temporarily halted a four-month conflict but continues to face repeated challenges.

According to the United States administration, President Donald Trump is dispatching his son-in-law Jared Kushner along with special envoy Steve Witkoff to lead

the American negotiating team in Qatar. However, Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmaeil Baghaei dismissed reports of planned bilateral discussions, stating that although Iran's technical delegation would visit Doha, the trip had no connection with the American delegation.

Baghaei categorically stated that no negotiations with the United States were planned in the coming days at any level. His remarks contrasted sharply with expectations that both sides would resume dialogue aimed at implementing the interim agreement reached on June 17.

The disagreement over whether talks will even take place reflects the continuing fragility of the ceasefire, which was intended to end months of hostilities that severely disrupted maritime trade through the Strait of Hormuz. The conflict has also created significant political and economic challenges, particularly for the United States, as rising energy prices and regional instability continue to dominate international attention.

Under the June 17 memorandum of understanding, both countries agreed to work within a 60-day framework to implement a 14-point roadmap. The agreement called for extending the earlier ceasefire, discussing Iran's nuclear programme, and negotiating a permanent settlement to reduce regional tensions. However, progress has remained slow, with both Washington and Tehran repeatedly accusing each other of violating various provisions of the agreement.

The conflict intensified after military operations involving the United States and Israel against Iran earlier this year. The escalation led to major disruptions in commercial shipping through the Strait of Hormuz, one of the world's most strategically important maritime routes. The narrow waterway normally carries nearly one-fifth of global oil trade, making any disruption a serious concern for international energy markets.

Price manipulation: US DOJ, states reach agreement with egg producers

WASHINGTON

Three of the largest egg producers in the United States have reached a settlement with the U.S. Department of Justice and a coalition of 17 states over allegations that they coordinated to manipulate egg prices, affecting retailers and consumers across the country. The agreement includes financial payments, large-scale food donations, and new compliance measures aimed at preventing similar conduct in the future.

According to the New York Attorney General's office, the settlement resolves an investigation into alleged anti-competitive practices involving Cal-Maine Foods, Versova, and Hickman's Egg Ranch. The authorities claimed the companies worked together over several years to influence a widely used daily egg price index, resulting in artificially higher prices throughout the national market.

South African cities shuttered ahead of anti-migrant protests

DURBAN

Workers stayed home, shops were shut and buses sat idle across South Africa on Tuesday, as fears mounted that planned anti-immigrant marches would descend into violence. Many foreigners from African countries avoided coming to work, and thousands had already fled ahead of Tuesday's deadline, set by the demonstrators for all undocumented migrants to leave.

Most have interpreted the deadline as a physical threat. Xenophobic protests in South Africa have in the past led to violence against immigrants and their property, with little distinction made between those who entered legally or not.

Landlords in the main city Johannesburg and port city of Durban were evicting foreign tenants for fear of their buildings being vandalised, witnesses said.

All these people, they were chased out by their landlords, Mabako Majole, a leader of the Congolese community, said next to a crowd of 100 people sleeping on the street in downtown Durban.

All these people are legal. They have documents. Police and military were deployed to the streets to try to keep order during the marches in several cities, which are expected to attract many thousands of mostly poor or unemployed South Africans.

The state has the duty and obligation to ensure that those that are demonstrating do so peacefully, Deputy National Commissioner for Policing Tebello Mosikili told a news conference.

A year after USAID shutdown, Americans still back foreign development aid

WASHINGTON

A year after the Trump administration dismantled the U.S. Agency for International Development, most Americans still support foreign aid to provide disaster relief, prevent disease outbreaks and improve security, according to a new poll commissioned by the Rockefeller Foundation and released Tuesday.

The poll of 2,022 voters showed Republicans and President Donald Trump's Make America Great Again base were skeptical of foreign aid before getting more details.Nearly all Americans overestimated by far how much Washington spent on such programs, with over a third thinking they accounted for 20% of the annual U.S. budget.

Venezuela Earthquake Survivors Demand Greater Government Relief Efforts

EL JUNQUITO

Public frustration is growing across Venezuela as thousands of survivors continue to wait for government assistance five days after two powerful earthquakes devastated several parts of the country. Rescue operations have become increasingly difficult, with hopes of finding more survivors fading as the confirmed death toll climbed above 1,700. Authorities also reported that nearly 5,000 people have been injured, while hundreds remain displaced after the disaster destroyed homes, businesses, and public infrastructure.

The twin earthquakes, measuring 7.2 and 7.5 in magnitude, struck on Wednesday, causing widespread destruction across multiple regions. Officials said nearly 200 buildings have been completely reduced to rubble, while several hundred more have suffered severe structural damage, leaving thousands of families without safe shelter.

Among those feared dead are as many as 140 people who had recently been deported from the United States, including children. They were reportedly staying at a hotel that collapsed during the powerful tremors, making it one of the deadliest single locations affected by the disaster. Rescue teams continue to search the debris, although the chances of finding additional survivors are diminishing with each passing day.

Experts believe the scale of destruction was worsened by years of inadequate infrastructure maintenance, weak enforcement of building regulations, and poor construction practices. According to disaster specialists, decades of neglect and insufficient oversight left many structures unable to withstand strong seismic activity, contributing significantly to the high number of casualties and injuries.

Frustration mounted across Venezuela as earthquake survivors awaited assistance while the death toll continued rising after devastating tremors

In El Junquito, a mountainous region located about 33 kilometres west of Caracas, residents have expressed disappointment over what they describe as a slow government response. The area, usually a popular weekend destination, has suffered extensive damage, with its commercial centre largely destroyed. During visits to the affected communities, damaged buildings and piles of debris remained visible, while many residents continued to live in temporary shelters.

Local communities have largely relied on volunteers, farmers, and neighbours for food, water, and other essential supplies. Residents say official assistance has been limited, forcing ordinary citizens to organise relief efforts on their own. Many families remain uncertain about when damaged buildings will be inspected or when reconstruction work will begin.

Several displaced residents have established makeshift camps in open spaces despite concerns over nearby unstable structures. Business owner Tony Abreu said he has been living in a tent since the disaster because both his home and shop have been declared unsafe. Like many others, he remains uncertain about when authorities will provide permanent accommodation or begin rebuilding damaged neighbourhoods.

IN THE COURT OF THE 1ST ADDL CIVIL JUDGE AND JMFC(JR.DVN) AT DODDABALLAPURA
C.Mis.No. 1192/2025
Petitioner: Sri. Prasanna Kumar S/o Late Nanjundappa Aged about 34 Years, Jodi karapura Village, Doddabelavangala Hobli, Doddaballapura Taluku, Bengaluru Rural District, V/s
Respondent: The Tahasildar, Doddaballapura Taluk, Doddaballapura.
PUBLIC NOTICE
Whereas the Petitioner has filed the above petition under Section 13 (3) and 14 of Registration of Births and Deaths Act, 1969 for seeking the death certificate of his father by name Sri. LATE Nanjundappa S/O LATE Kempayya who died on 17.10.2019 at Jodi karapura Village, Doddabelavangala Hobli, Doddaballapura Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District.
In this regard it is hereby notice that whoever has interested in the said matter may appear in person or through an advocate duly authorized before the above said court on 30/07/2026 at 11-00 am. In default this matter will be
heard and disposed of an ex-parte order.
Given under my hand and seal of the court on the day of 30/06/2026.
By order of the court
Chief Ministirial Officer, Prl. Civil Judge & J.M.F.C. at Doddaballapur
Advocate: **Anjanegowda V.**, No.1, 1st Floor, Govt, Employees Association Building, Beside PLD Bank, Near Taluk Office Circle, Doddaballapura - 56 1203

Document Lost

This is to inform to General public that my client Smt, Parvathi & M.Vijaykumar, Residing at Khadripura Village, Kondarajanahalli Grama Panchayath, Kasaba Hobli, Kolar Taluk and Kolar Dist, I am the Owner of the Below said Property,while Sale Deed for taken Digital copy ,have lost following Documents of property pertating to below Mentioned property Situated at Residing at Khadripura Village, Kondarajanahalli Grama Panchayath, Kasaba Hobli, Kolar Taluk and Kolar Dist,, had published the factum of lost of his Original Sale deed, Dated;-29-06-1996, Reg Sale Deed executed by Sri.Jan Pasha S/o Sri. Syed Muthurja in favour of Smt.Nazreeya Taj W/o Sri.Abdul Khader Ahamed, with respect to schedule property, which is registered as Book no.1, Volume no.2239, in Pages 176-178, Doc No.655-1996-97 on 29-06-1996., in respect of Property bearing Khadripura Village, Katha no.347/1, Assessment no.178/1, in Measuring 70x 25+45/2 Feets., police complaint have been filed with regards to loss of the above said Document vide complaint in NCR NO. Lost Report no.2279859/2026, DATED;-29-06-2026, and complaint dated;-29-06-2026, by respective person,if anybody finds these Document please inform within 7 Days in Below mentioned Address.

Place;-Chinthamani,
Date;-29-06-2026

K.S.HARISH KUMAR
ADVOCATE
Office: NEAR KISHORE SCHOOL, ABOVE APPOLO PHARMACY, BESIDE SANTHOSHI MATHA TEMPLE, BANGALORE MAIN ROAD CHINTHAMANI.
MOBILE NO:9980110692

NAME CHANGE

I, **MUKHTAR AHMED,** Resident of No. 6A, 1st A Main Road Bhuvaneshwari nagar, Bengaluru -560032 Karnataka, have changed my name to **SHAIKH MUKHTAR AHMED ,** vide affidavit dated: 30.06.2026 before notary R. BASAVARAJA, Bengaluru.

NAME CHANGE

I, **SHAIK MOHAMMED AZMATHULLA,** S/o. Shaike Samiulla, Resident of No. 5/1, A Cross, Bismillah Nagar, Bengaluru -560029, Karnataka, have changed my name to **SHAIKE MOHAMMED AZMATHULLA**, vide affidavit dated: 30.06.2026 before notary R. BASAVARAJA, Bengaluru.

NAME CHANGE

I, **FATIMA SUGRA NOORUDDIN,** W/o. Manager Nooruddin, Resident of No. 202, Fortune Tristar Apts, North Road, Cooke Town, Fraser Town Post, Bengaluru -560005, Karnataka, have changed my name to **FATHIMA SUGRA,** vide affidavit dated: 30.06.2026 before notary R. BASAVARAJA, Bengaluru.

NAME CHANGE

I, **SYED TAMEEM** S/o. Syed Yusuf, (Old Name), Residing at No. 62, 5th Floor, Rock Rose Residency, 1st Cross, 2nd Main, SRK Garden, BHEL Officers Colony, Jayanagar Post, Bengaluru -560041, Karnataka, have changed my name to **TAMEEM surname SYED** S/o. Syed Yousuf (New Name), vide affidavit dated: 24.06.2026 before notary V. RAJASHEKHARA, Bengaluru.

NAME CHANGE

I **RAMESH GIRI NARAYANAGIRI SWAMY** S/o, Narayana Giriswamy R, resident of No 12, 2nd Cross Lakshmi Venkateshwara Layout Near Sai Sadbhavana school Bannerghatta Dist, 560083, Have Changed My Name From **RAMESHAGIRI NARAYANAGIRI SWAMY** to **RAMESH GIRI NARAYANAGIRI SWAMY** vide affidavit Sworn before Notary B.A. LAKSHMINARAYANA RAO, Bengaluru Dated: 30.06.2026.

NEW CALEDONIA LOYALISTS EMERGE LARGEST BLOC AFTER ELECTION, LACK MAJORITY

WELLINGTON

New Caledonia's non-independence coalition emerged as the largest bloc in the legislature after the French Pacific territory's provincial elections, but fell short of an outright majority, leaving a small centrist Pacific party in the role of kingmaker, final results showed.

The elections, held on June 28 after repeated delays, were the first provincial vote since 2019 and followed deadly unrest in 2024 over proposed changes to the local electoral roll, exposing the deep strains in France's relationship with New Caledonia and its Indigenous Kanak population.

The French Pacific territory, about 1,500 km (930 miles) east of Australia, has around 270,000 inhabitants, including roughly 41% Melanesian Kanaks and 24% of European origin, mostly French, and has long been split between pro-independence and pro-France camps.

Final results published by the High Commission showed Sonia Backes' loyalist alliance, Les Loyalistes-Le Rassemblement, will hold 24 seats of the 54 seats in the Congress, while the pro-indepence block of UC-FLNKS, UNI-Palika and Dynamique Autochtone won 26 seats.

The balance sits with centrist party L'Eveil oceanien, with four seats. L'Eveil oceanien is expected to be pivotal in deciding whether the next executive leans loyalist or can be shaped by a broader deal.

Under New Caledonia's system, Congress next elects the government by proportional representation.

Taiwan's president urged graduating military cadets to resist espionage, defend democracy, and strengthen national security against external threats.

Taiwan President Urges Cadets To Resist Chinese Espionage Threats

TAIPEI

Taiwan President Lai Ching-te has called on graduating military cadets to remain vigilant against Chinese espionage and foreign influence, urging them to safeguard the island's democracy, freedom, and national sovereignty. Addressing a graduation ceremony at the historic Fu Hsing Kang College on Tuesday, Lai emphasized the growing security challenges facing Taiwan and stressed the importance of loyalty within the armed forces.

The president's remarks come amid increasing tensions between Taiwan and China, with Taipei reporting a steady rise in espionage cases allegedly linked to Beijing, particularly within Taiwan's military. Chinese military activity around the self-governed island has also intensified in recent years, contributing to growing concerns over regional stability and national security.

Speaking to the graduating cadets, Lai said that a soldier's honor is rooted in loyalty to the nation and its democratic values. He warned that Taiwan's armed forces continue to face threats ranging from infiltration and sabotage to espionage and attempts to create divisions within society. He urged the graduates to clearly distinguish between friends and adversaries while remaining committed to protecting the country's sovereignty.

Lai stated that resisting all forms of pressure, coercion, and temptation is essential for defending Taiwan's security. He encouraged the young officers to remain alert to attempts at infiltration and to uphold democratic principles while carrying out their military responsibilities.The president also reaffirmed Taiwan's long-standing political position by stating that the Republic of China, Taiwan's official name, and the People's Republic of China are separate entities and are not subordinate to one another. The statement reflects the government's continued rejection of Beijing's claim that Taiwan is part of its territory.

GERMANY SHELTER SHOOTING

Germany Shelter Shooting: Child Custody Dispute Suspected

STADE

A tragic shooting at a shelter for mothers and children in northern Germany has left six people dead, with investigators believing the attack was linked to an apparent child custody dispute. Authorities said the suspected gunman, a 45-year-old man, opened fire inside the facility, targeting employees before being taken into custody.

The incident occurred in the town of Stade, located near the major port city of Hamburg. According to officials,

the suspect had arrived at the shelter earlier in the day for a scheduled appointment before launching the attack around midday. Police responded swiftly to the emergency, securing the area and detaining those believed to be directly connected with the case.

Authorities confirmed that all six victims were employees of the shelter. The deceased included four women and two men. Five victims died at the scene, while the sixth succumbed to injuries after being transported to a hospital. Officials have not yet released the identities of the victims as investigations continue and families are being informed.Police said the suspected shooter's three-month-old daughter and the child's mother were unharmed. Both are safe following the incident. Investigators have taken the alleged gunman into custody along with the child's mother and another woman, who are being questioned as part of the ongoing investigation. Officials have not disclosed the precise reasons for their detention but indicated that they may possess information relevant to the case.German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier expressed deep shock over the attack, describing it as an act of extreme violence committed at a place intended to provide safety and protection for vulnerable women and children.

Yamaha confirms Quartararo and Rins departure

ASSEN

In a major shake-up for the MotoGP paddock, Yamaha has officially announced that both Fabio Quartararo and Alex Rins will depart from the team at the conclusion of the 2026 season. The decision marks the end of a significant chapter for the Japanese manufacturer as it seeks to overhaul its struggling racing program.

Fabio Quartararo, who joined Yamaha in 2019, has been the face of the team for years. During his tenure, the 26-year-old French rider achieved immense success, securing 11 race victories, 32 podium finishes, and the prestigious 2021 MotoGP world championship title. Meanwhile, Alex Rins joined the squad in 2024 following a challenging period with Honda, but both riders have found it difficult to reclaim the team's former glory.

Yamaha has faced immense technical hurdles recently, resulting in a notable lack of competitiveness on the track. Since the start of 2024, the duo has managed only a single podium finish, which came courtesy of Quartararo at last year's Spanish Grand Prix. The current 2026 campaign has proven even more difficult, with the team languishing near the bottom of the standings with only 64 points. With both riders currently outside the top ten in the championship rankings, the manufacturer is now looking toward a fresh start. This split signals a strategic pivot for Yamaha as they hope to rebuild their machinery and return to the front of the grid in future seasons. Fans now eagerly await news on who will replace these two talents.

Yamaha will part ways with Fabio Quartararo and Alex Rins after the 2026 season to overhaul its program

Swann: Sooryavanshi is cricket's toughest new talent

NEW DELHI

As England prepares for the upcoming T20I series against India, former spinner Graeme Swann has issued a stern warning to the English bowlers regarding the challenge of facing teenager Vaibhav Sooryavanshi. Swann believes the young left-hander is currently one of the most difficult batters to contain in world cricket, noting he has successfully navigated every test faced thus far.

While acknowledging that video analysis is common in modern sports, Swann admitted that preparing for a talent like Sooryavanshi is remarkably difficult. "He is still new to international cricket, but he has already played two IPL seasons," Swann noted. This means there is plenty of footage, yet the former spinner pointed out that no bowler has truly discovered a reliable method to dismiss him consistently.

However, Swann sees a glimmer of hope in England's pace spearhead, Jofra Archer. Given their time together during the IPL, Archer holds a unique edge. "He has seen Sooryavanshi from the dugout, bowled to him in the nets, and watched him closely," said Swann. He believes Archer's firsthand experience, combined with his natural express pace, might provide the best opportunity to unsettle the young prodigy.

Despite this potential advantage, Swann remains realistic about the task ahead. He emphasized that regardless of the bowler's reputation or the game plan formulated, Sooryavanshi has consistently found answers. England enters this series knowing that while Archer may have the insight, containing this fearless rising star remains a massive hurdle for the entire team.

Aston Martin plans upgrades to retain Alonso

LONDON

Adrian Newey is banking on a major performance upgrade at the Hungarian Grand Prix to convince Fernando Alonso to extend his Aston Martin career through 2027

Adrian Newey, the team principal at Aston Martin, is banking on a massive car upgrade to convince Fernando Alonso to continue racing through 2027. Alonso, who turns 45 next month, remains the oldest driver on the Formula One grid and is currently seeking tangible proof that his team is moving in the right direction.

The upcoming improvements are scheduled for the Hungarian Grand Prix on July 26. Newey believes that if the car performs as expected, Alonso will feel motivated to remain in the cockpit. He highlighted that the veteran's experience and ability to guide technical development make him a vital asset for the struggling squad.

Aston Martin has endured a brutal start to the 2026 season, managing only a single point across eight races. The team has been held back by an uncompetitive engine and an overweight car. In response, Newey is introducing a package that features a new nose, revised aerodynamic surfaces, and significant weight savings in the chassis and gearbox. While the core structure remains largely the same, the team hopes these changes will bring them closer to the weight limit.

Despite the optimism, Newey remains cautious about predicting specific results because the team's simulation tools are still being refined. He also addressed recent health challenges that had occupied his attention, noting he is feeling better now. Ultimately, the performance in Hungary will be the defining factor in whether the legendary Spanish driver chooses to extend his storied career for another year.

Harmanpreet Kaur leads India's gold quest

MUMBAI

The BCCI has officially announced a 15-player squad for the 2026 Asian Games, with star batter Harmanpreet Kaur set to lead the charge. India enters the tournament in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan, as the defending champions, eager to repeat their historic gold medal performance from the previous edition in Hangzhou.

The selection committee has maintained consistency, sticking primarily to the group that competed in the ICC Women's T20 World Cup. The only adjustment is the inclusion of wicketkeeper-batter G. Kamalini, who replaces Yastika Bhatia. The batting lineup remains formidable, featuring explosive talents like Shafali Verma and Jemimah Rodrigues alongside Vice-captain Smriti Mandhana.

The team's balance is bolstered by versatile all-rounders, with Deepti Sharma anchoring the middle order. The bowling attack looks equally balanced, combining the pace of Renuka Singh Thakur and Arundhati Reddy with the spin expertise of Radha Yadav. Notably, off-spinner Shreyanka Patil has been named in the squad, though her participation remains subject to passing a final fitness test following an ankle injury that sidelined her during the World Cup.

Cricket's return to the Asian Games has been highly celebrated, marking its fourth appearance since its 2010 debut. With a mix of seasoned veterans and rising stars, India looks well-positioned to retain its title. The tournament is scheduled to take place from September 19 to October 4, and the squad is ready to defend their gold medal on the international stage.

Yuvraj Singh honors Ben Stokes' iconic career

NEW DELHI

Former Indian cricket legend Yuvraj Singh has shared an emotional tribute to Ben Stokes following the English star's retirement from international cricket. Stokes stepped away after his final Test match against New Zealand, concluding an extraordinary 15-year journey that redefined the role of an all-rounder.

Yuvraj took to media to celebrate Stokes, pointing to specific legendary performances as proof of his greatness. He famously cited Stokes' unforgettable World Cup final heroics and the incredible, match-winning 135 not out at Headingley. However, Yuvraj emphasized that it was Stokes' character, not just his records that made him truly special.

"I know what it feels like to be on top of the world one day and at your absolute lowest the next," Yuvraj wrote. He praised Stokes for his transparency regarding mental health battles and his ability to persevere through personal tragedy, including the loss of his father. For Yuvraj, this resilience is what separates "good" players from the "truly great."

Stokes leaves the international stage with two World Cup winner's medals and a reputation as a captain who inspired his teammates to believe in the impossible. Yuvraj concluded his heartfelt note by thanking the Englishman for his contributions to the sport. "Congratulations on an epic career! The game will miss you, Ben. Enjoy the next chapter. You've earned it!" he added, marking the end of an era for one of cricket's most fearless competitors.

Joe Root honors Ben Stokes' diamond career

NEW DELHI

Former England captain Joe Root paid an emotional tribute to Ben Stokes after the legendary all-rounder retired from international cricket following a remarkable 15-year career. Stokes bowed out after his final match against New Zealand at Trent Bridge, leaving behind a legacy as one of England's greatest match-winners. Reflecting on their journey together, Root praised Stokes' ability to thrive under immense pressure, saying, "You can only make diamonds in pressure." He recalled unforgettable performances, including Stokes' unbeaten 135 at Headingley in the 2019 Ashes and his match-defining role in England's 2019 ODI World Cup triumph. Root also credited Stokes for inspiring a generation of cricketers and transforming England's Test side alongside coach Brendon McCullum through fearless, attacking cricket.

Anmol Ekka to lead junior hockey squad

NEW DELHI

Hockey India has officially revealed its 22-member junior men's squad for the upcoming exposure tour of Belgium, taking place from July 5 to July 18, 2026. This trip marks the first major test for the team under their newly appointed head coach, Frederic Soyez, as they prepare for the vital FIH Hockey Men's Junior Asia Cup later this year.

Defender Anmol Ekka will captain the side, bringing leadership to a group focused on refining their tactical discipline and team chemistry. The roster is bolstered by four players - Ekka, Adrohit Ekka, Ajeet Yadav, and Rohit Kullu, who were instrumental in securing a bronze medal at the 2025 FIH Men's Junior World Cup in Tamil Nadu. Their experience will be crucial as India prepares to face high-level European competition.

During this intense tour, the team will play two matches against Austria, two against hosts Belgium, and one each against Germany and the Netherlands. Coach Soyez emphasized that the goal is not just about results, but about understanding the rigorous demands of international hockey. He aims to strengthen the group's unity while testing new tactical combinations.

By pitting young talent against some of the world's best hockey nations, Hockey India hopes to bridge the gap between domestic development and elite international standards. With a blend of seasoned junior players and fresh faces, the squad is eager to prove themselves on foreign soil and build the necessary momentum to compete for top honors at the upcoming Asian continental championship.

Pujara: Iyer must deliver in England conditions

NEW DELHI

As India prepares for a high-stakes T20I series in England, former star Cheteshwar Pujara has highlighted the immense pressure facing newly appointed Captain Shreyas Iyer. Following in the footsteps of legends like Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma, Iyer is tasked with achieving a rare series win on English soil, a feat that Pujara describes as a significant challenge for the young leader.

Iyer's return to the T20I setup after a two-year hiatus adds another layer of complexity. While Pujara voiced full confidence in Iyer's tactical abilities, citing his proactive leadership and success with the Punjab Kings in the IPL, he emphasized that the true measure of success will be Iyer's individual contribution with the bat. "The real test will be with his batting," Pujara noted. "He must prove himself in the middle order and deliver under English conditions."

The former batter also touched on the buzz surrounding teenage sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi. Despite the youngster's rising fame, Pujara expects him to remain sidelined for now. He argued that India's established top-order lineup is currently too strong to justify an immediate debut for the newcomer.

As the team gears up for the tour, all eyes will be on whether Iyer can balance the demands of his first international leadership role with the need to score runs. With the team aiming for a series victory, Iyer's ability to perform under pressure will be the defining story of this tour.

Lucy Hamilton ready for T20 World semi-final

LONDON

Australia's young pace bowler Lucy Hamilton is entering the ICC Women's T20 World Cup semi-final with a major boost in self-belief. The 20-year-old credits her recent disciplined performances, especially a high-pressure match against India at Lord's, for preparing her to face the West Indies in the upcoming knockout clash.

Despite her limited international experience, Hamilton has thrived while opening the bowling. Reflecting on her time on cricket's biggest stage, she admitted that while the atmosphere at Lord's brought natural nerves, the experience solidified her readiness for big games. "I took heaps of confidence out of the India game," Hamilton said. She believes that surviving the intensity of that matchup has made her feel fully prepared for the bigger challenge of a semi-final at The Oval.

Hamilton is pleased with the short turnaround between games, noting that the team is eager to keep their current winning momentum alive. She took the time to visit The Oval early to study the outfield and facilities, emphasizing that the team's focus remains on adapting quickly to changing conditions.

The Aussie fast bowler is well aware of the threat posed by the West Indies. She anticipates a fearless opponent that has nothing to lose, but she remains confident in Australia's ability to execute their own style of play. Australia is now just one win away from reaching Sunday's final at Lord's, and the squad is hungry to continue their pursuit of the championship trophy.

QUICK READ

Government releases funds for struggling MSMEs

NEW DELHI

The Indian government has released Rs 1 lakh crore to help small businesses survive the ongoing Gulf crisis. Many MSMEs faced severe cash shortages due to shipping delays and supply chain issues caused by regional tensions. To prevent job losses, this relief comes through the latest Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme. Officials praise the resilience of local businesses, noting they are already finding new export markets. Looking ahead, the government plans to create better financing options to support exporters long-term. This crucial support aims to keep these vital industries growing despite difficult global economic conditions.

Gold and silver prices extend recent losses

NEW DELHI

Gold and silver prices dropped again as investors remain worried about global instability and future interest rate hikes. Growing tensions in West Asia and a cautious outlook from the U.S. Federal Reserve are driving traders away from precious metals. Gold futures on the exchange fell, reflecting weak global market sentiment. Analysts note that markets are bracing for potential rate increases, which typically lower the appeal of non-yielding assets like gold. Meanwhile, silver also faced selling pressure as it struggled to hold key price levels. Investors are now watching upcoming U.S. economic data.

Government extends deadline for GST appeals

NEW DELHI

The Finance Ministry has extended the deadline for filing appeals to the Goods and Services Tax Appellate Tribunal until July 31. This move comes after taxpayers faced technical glitches on the GSTAT portal caused by an overwhelming rush of filings. Nearly 30,000 appeals were submitted in just the last two weeks, causing significant system congestion. The government urges businesses to file early rather than waiting for the final date. Meanwhile, India's tax revenue continues to climb, with recent data showing strong growth in both GST and direct tax collections despite ongoing global economic challenges.

OYO's IPO faces major legal financial risks

OYO has filed an updated IPO prospectus, highlighting significant operational risks, international market reliance, and ongoing legal disputes.

MUMBAI

Hospitality giant OYO, under parent company Prism Hotels and Resorts, has filed an updated draft red herring prospectus (DRHP) ahead of its highly anticipated initial public offering. While the company's recent financial turnaround has caught investor attention, the filing reveals significant legal and operational risks that potential shareholders must carefully consider.

A primary concern is the company's growing reliance on international markets. Revenue from operations outside India has surged, now accounting for nearly 84 percent of its total intake. The United

States, United Kingdom, and Europe combined generate the vast majority of OYO's revenue, leaving the firm heavily exposed to overseas market fluctuations. In contrast, India's contribution to the total revenue has dropped to roughly 16 percent.

Furthermore, a long-standing legal battle with Zostel Hospitality continues to loom over the IPO. The dispute, which dates back to a failed acquisition attempt in 2015, could force OYO to issue up to 7 percent of its shareholding to Zostel or pay a massive cash settlement if a final ruling goes against them.

Finally, the document clarifies that recent profits are not purely from operating performance. While the firm reported net profits for the last two years, these were heavily boosted by deferred tax credits. In fact, before factoring in these tax benefits, the company actually recorded a loss for the 2025 fiscal year.

These disclosures highlight that OYO's path to long-term profitability remains tied to complex international and legal factors.

Maharashtra FDA suspends 6 restaurant licenses

The Maharashtra FDA has suspended the licenses of six Mumbai eateries, including Nariman Point's Flint & Waarsa, following health violations like pest infestations and expired food.

MUMBAI

The Maharashtra Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has suspended the business licenses of six restaurants and eateries following a rigorous statewide enforcement drive. Inspections conducted between June 26 and June 28 revealed severe health and safety violations, ranging from unhygienic conditions to the storage of expired food items.

Among the establishments facing action is Flint & Waarsa in Nariman Point, where officials discovered misbranded products. Following an inspection on June 27, authorities seized stock and destroyed over 16,000 rupees worth of expired food. Other affected venues are located in Borivali, Santacruz, Andheri, Bandra, and Bhandup.

The raids painted a concerning picture of kitchen hygiene at these locations. Reports highlighted the presence of pests like cockroaches and rats, alongside improper raw food storage and failing refrigeration systems. Furthermore, several businesses were found to be operating without mandatory documentation, and staff members had not undergone required health check-ups. The FDA also noted that these establishments failed to provide proper mechanisms for handling customer complaints.

This crackdown was part of a broader safety initiative that saw 31 inspections across the state.

In related operations, the FDA seized banned items like gutkha and pan masala worth nearly 35 lakh rupees, resulting in 19 arrests and the seizure of three vehicles.

The department has vowed to maintain this strict enforcement to ensure all food establishments meet safety standards, promising continued legal action against those who put public health at risk.

Airlines slash mishandled baggage rates by 23 percent

NEW DELHI

Airlines have successfully slashed mishandled baggage rates by 23 percent over the last year, thanks to a major push toward digital transformation. Despite these improvements, the issue remains a significant financial drain, costing the global aviation industry 6.3 billion dollars annually.

Reports highlights how real-time data, AI-driven routing, and biometric systems are helping airlines better manage luggage. However, the sheer volume of global travel, with 5 billion passengers recorded in 2025 continues to outpace existing infrastructure. Last year, 24 million bags were still mishandled.

The financial impact is stark - each mishandled bag costs an average of 260 dollars. Because airline profit margins are slim, averaging just 8 dollars per passenger, losing a single bag wipes out the profit from more than 30 seats, while five lost bags can erase the profit of an entire flight.

Delayed bags remain the primary concern, responsible for 70 percent of total costs due to recovery and delivery expenses. Transfers between flights continue to be the most common point of failure, accounting for 39 percent of all cases.

Mumbai recorded 80,221 property registrations in the first half of 2026, marking its strongest performance since 2013.

INDIA RECORDS STRONGEST HALF-YEAR REAL ESTATE

NEW DELHI

Mumbai's real estate market has reached a significant milestone, recording its strongest first-half performance since 2013. According to reports, the city saw 80,221 property registrations in the first half of 2026, a 6 percent increase compared to the same period last year.

The surge in activity also provided a boost to state coffers, with stamp duty collections rising 4 percent year-on-year to 6,968 crore rupees, also the highest level seen in 14 years. June alone is expected to see 13,302 registrations, a 15 percent jump from June 2025, which would mark the best June performance in over a decade.

Market experts attribute this growth to sustained confidence among homebuyers. Shishir Baijal, Chairman and Managing Director of Knight Frank India, noted that the market's resilience is particularly impressive given the high performance of the previous year.The data also points to an interesting trend in the types of homes being purchased. While stamp duty revenue grew at a slightly slower pace than the number of registrations, analysts suggest this indicates a shift toward mid-market properties. This confirms that demand is becoming more broad-based, moving beyond just high-value luxury transactions. As registrations continue to outpace previous peaks, Mumbai's residential sector appears to be entering a period of steady, reliable growth driven by genuine end-user demand rather than speculative investment.

India's water sector offers huge investment: Reports

NEW DELHI

India is facing a critical water challenge that could see demand double the available supply by 2030. To address this, reports reveals a massive 20 lakh crore rupee investment opportunity over the next decade. These funds are set to flow into vital areas, including water treatment, wastewater recycling, and advanced sewage infrastructure.

Although India holds nearly 18 percent of the global population, it possesses only about 4 percent of the world's freshwater. This imbalance, exacerbated by rapid urbanization, industrial growth, and

the depletion of groundwater, has turned water security into an urgent national priority.

Government initiatives like the Jal Jeevan Mission, AMRUT 2.0, and Namami Gange are currently leading the charge to improve water access and treatment. Sewage treatment remains the largest untapped segment, with a daily shortfall of over 72,000 million litres. Furthermore, the rise of high-tech industries such as semiconductor manufacturing, data centres, and green hydrogen production is creating an urgent new demand for ultra-pure water. These combined pressures are transforming the water sector into one of the most critical and investment-ready landscapes in the country's infrastructure ecosystem.

India faces water crisis investment boom

NEW DELHI: India is heading toward a severe water crisis. By 2030, demand for water will likely double what is currently available. With only 4% of the world's freshwater, India struggles to support 18% of the global population. This scarcity has created a massive Rs 20 lakh crore investment opportunity. Companies are now rushing to build better water treatment, recycling, and sewage systems. Projects like Jal Jeevan Mission are leading the charge. As industries expand, the need for clean water is no longer optional. This shift promises a sustainable future, turning a national challenge into a huge economic engine.

India approves major semiconductor mission expansion

NEW DELHI

The Finance Ministry's Expenditure Finance Committee (EFC) has officially approved a substantial 1.25 lakh crore rupee outlay for the India Semiconductor Mission (ISM) 2.0. This major financial commitment marks a significant step forward in the country's ambition to become a global leader in electronics manufacturing, with the proposal now heading to the Union Cabinet for final authorization.

This new allocation represents a massive jump from the 76,000 crore rupees provided for the original ISM, which successfully facilitated the approval of 10 semiconductor facilities across chip fabrication, assembly, and design. The expanded phase 2.0 aims to go beyond basic manufacturing by building a robust, self-reliant ecosystem. It is designed to support the entire supply chain, including specialty chemicals, industrial gases, essential capital equipment, and local MSMEs.

The government's strategic goal is ambitious: to meet 75 percent of domestic semiconductor demand by 2030.

IRDAI to tackle bank insurance miss-selling

MUMBAI

The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) is set to roll out strict new guidelines aimed at curbing the miss-selling of insurance products by banks. Chairperson Ajay Seth announced the move, emphasizing the regulator's commitment to protecting policyholders from inappropriate sales practices.

At a media briefing, Seth also provided updates on the much-anticipated 'Bima Sugam' digital platform. The initiative is on track for a September launch, beginning with motor insurance, followed by health and term-life products. This platform is part of a broader push to make insurance more transparent and accessible.

The regulator is also developing a new framework focused on "product suitability," which will offer clear, illustrative guidance to ensure customers are sold policies that actually meet their needs, rather than just hitting sales targets. This follows recent moves to tighten executive pay, which now links the bonuses of top management to customer-centric metrics like claims settlement speed and grievance redressal.

On the investment front, Seth confirmed that the regulator is processing applications for foreign insurers looking to increase their stakes in Indian firms, following the government's decision to allow 100 percent foreign direct investment (FDI) in the sector under the automatic route. While LIC remains under a separate 20 percent cap, the broader insurance market including brokers and intermediaries is now fully open to overseas investors, signaling a major shift toward greater international participation and strengthened regulatory oversight across the industry.

Tamil Nadu launches huge rural internet project

CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu is taking a major leap toward digital equality. The state government has officially launched a new tender to purchase 2.5 lakh Optical Network Terminals (ONTs). This move aims to finally bring high-speed broadband to rural homes, schools, hospitals, and local government offices across the state.

For years, thousands of villages have been connected by underground fibre-optic cables under the BharatNet Phase II project. However, this massive infrastructure remained largely inactive because the necessary hardware to connect individual buildings was missing. These new devices will act as the crucial link, converting fibre signals into usable internet for everyday users.

According to the Tamil Nadu FibreNet Corporation (TANFINET), the winning company will not just supply these devices but will also handle installation and maintenance for four years. This long-term support ensures that rural residents enjoy consistent, reliable service without frequent technical interruptions.

This project is a game changer for rural communities. With faster internet, students will access better online learning tools, while families can use telemedicine and digital banking from home. Beyond individual benefits, government officials believe this initiative will attract new businesses to smaller towns, creating jobs and reducing the digital gap between cities and villages. By turning dormant cables into a functional network, Tamil Nadu is ensuring that the digital future reaches every corner of the state, empowering citizens and boosting the local economy through seamless connectivity and improved access to essential modern services.

EMPOWERING MEGHALAYA'S VISIONARIES

Sangma highlights entrepreneurship for economic growth

SHILLONG

Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma has identified entrepreneurship as the vital foundation for the state's long-term economic growth. Speaking at the launch of the "Achievers of the Month" program in Shillong, Sangma emphasized that while the government provides the necessary infrastructure and policies, it is the vision and resilience of local entrepreneurs that truly drive the economy forward.

The new initiative aims to

celebrate success stories across diverse sectors, including agriculture, sports, and music, providing a platform for individuals to share their journeys and inspire others. Sangma highlighted that the government's role is to cultivate an ecosystem where grassroots ideas can evolve into successful enterprises. He noted that existing support programs have already helped many local ventures expand their reach from small rural operations to markets in major cities.

Acknowledging the inherent risks and sleepless nights involved in building a business, the Chief Minister urged aspiring entrepreneurs to stay focused and resilient despite inevitable setbacks. To further champion this cause, the government has announced that July will be dedicated to honoring entrepreneurs through storytelling sessions, public outreach, and social media campaigns.

During the event, 50 entrepreneurs were honored for their significant achievements.

This initiative is set to continue monthly, recognizing excellence in various fields to foster a statewide culture of innovation.

By bringing these personal successes into the public eye, the government hopes to dismantle barriers and demonstrate that sustainable economic transformation is within reach for those willing to innovate.

Former IOCL chairman hails energy resilience

NEW DELHI

India's success in maintaining stable fuel supplies during the recent Strait of Hormuz conflict was not a result of emergency measures, but the culmination of a decade of strategic energy planning. According to former Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) Chairman B. Ashok, the country's ability to swiftly pivot its crude oil import strategy highlights the success of long-term infrastructure and diplomatic investments.

"This rapid adjustment was not an overnight reaction, it was the result of infrastructure and relationships built over a substantial period," Ashok noted. Prior to the conflict, nearly 45 percent of India's crude imports transited through the Strait of Hormuz. In just a few weeks of disruption, India successfully increased its supply from non-Hormuz regions to 70 percent. Ashok credited these sustained, long-term investments in refining capacity and international energy partnerships with ensuring India's energy security remained intact despite global geopolitical volatility. By building these robust reliability mechanisms over time, the industry was able to effectively navigate a potential crisis.

Morocco defeats Netherlands to reach round 16

Morocco secured a dramatic penalty shootout victory over the Netherlands, advancing to the World Cup round of 16

MONTERREY

Morocco is heading to the World Cup round of 16 after an incredible comeback victory against the Netherlands. The tense match, held at Monterrey Stadium, ended in a dramatic penalty shootout that secured Morocco's spot in the next stage of the tournament.

The Netherlands initially took the lead through Cody Gakpo's strike in the 72nd minute. However, the African side refused to give up. Their persistence paid off in the 91st minute when Issa Diop scored a crucial equalizer, forcing the game into extra time. Following a scoreless extra half-hour, the match moved to penalties. Despite trailing early, Morocco kept their cool as the Dutch missed three attempts, allowing Ismael Saibari to seal the win.

Manager Mohamed Ouahbi credited the victory to his team's deep self-belief and tactical identity. He noted that the squad's historic performance in the 2022 World Cup fundamentally changed their mentality, helping players and fans alike realize their true potential.

Looking ahead, Morocco will face co-host Canada in Houston on July 4. While fans are excited, Ouahbi remains grounded. He warned that the match against Canada will be a difficult challenge and not the "walk in the park" some might expect. He emphasized that his team must stay focused and play their best football to continue their journey.

Additionally, Ouahbi thanked the local Mexican fans for their passionate support, promising that Morocco will provide the same hospitality when they co-host the 2030 World Cup.

Heartbreak in Monterrey leaves Koeman uncertain

MONTERREY

Netherlands coach Ronald Koeman faces an uncertain future following his team's heartbreaking World Cup elimination. The Dutch side crashed out in the round of 32 after a dramatic penalty shootout loss against Morocco at Monterrey Stadium, marking the team's earliest tournament exit in two decades.

Ronald Koeman faces an uncertain future as Dutch coach following the Netherlands' early World Cup exit after a heartbreaking penalty shootout loss to Morocco

"I have not resigned yet, but I am going to reflect on my future," Koeman told reporters after the match. He explained that the pain of the defeat was still fresh and he needed time to process the early departure before making any firm decisions about his role.

The match appeared to be in the Netherlands' grasp after Cody Gakpo scored a brilliant goal in the 72nd minute. However, Morocco pushed hard and found a late equalizer in the 91st minute through Issa Diop. During the following penalty shootout, three Dutch players - Justin Kluivert, Quinten Timber, and Crysencio Summerville failed to convert their shots, handing the victory to Morocco.

Koeman defended his tactical choice to play with five defenders, arguing that it helped stabilize the team defensively compared to earlier games.

Despite the criticism, he insisted he would make the same decision again. However, he admitted that his team struggled to create enough attacking threats and lacked the final pass needed to win.

As the Netherlands once again faces the disappointment of missing out on a first-ever World Cup title, the team must now look toward an uncertain rebuilding period starting with their coach's looming decision.

Paraguay eliminates Germany from World Cup

FOXBOROUGH

Paraguay pulled off one of the biggest shocks in tournament history, eliminating four-time champions Germany in a tense penalty shootout at Boston Stadium. The historic win saw the South American side reach the last 16 of the 2026 FIFA World Cup after a 1-1 stalemate in regular time.

Julio Enciso gave Paraguay a dream start, finding the net in the 42nd minute. Germany, known for their resilience, fought back in the second half when Kai Havertz headed home a precise Florian Wirtz cross to equalize. Despite Germany's best efforts to push for a winner, including a header from Jonathan Tah that was later disallowed, the teams remained locked at 1-1.

The match shifted to a nerve-wracking penalty shootout. Germany, who had never lost a World Cup shootout before, struggled early as Havertz had his attempt saved.

The shootout swung back and forth with missed chances and clutch saves from both keepers. While German veteran Manuel Neuer performed heroics to keep his team's hopes alive by saving a crucial strike, Germany ultimately faltered.

After Paraguay missed two chances to seal the victory, Jose Canale finally held his nerve, burying the third match-winning spot-kick to spark wild celebrations for the Paraguayan squad. The defeat marks a heartbreaking exit for Germany, while Paraguay celebrates a monumental victory, proving once again that in the World Cup, nothing is ever guaranteed.

Canada shatters viewership records in WC

TORONTO

Canada's dream run in the 2026 FIFA World Cup has shattered national television records. A staggering 11.8 million Canadians tuned in to watch their team achieve a historic milestone, the country's first-ever knockout stage victory in a World Cup, a hard-fought win against South Africa.

According to data shared by FIFA Media, the game captured the nation's imagination like no other, becoming the most-watched knockout fixture in Canadian history, outside of previous World Cup finals. The match drew an average audience of 5.2 million viewers throughout the broadcast. FIFA noted that these figures are based on overnight data, with final, consolidated viewership numbers expected to be released once the tournament concludes.

This monumental win has set the stage for a highly anticipated Round of 16 clash. Canada is set to face Morocco on July 4, following a thrilling victory by the North African side. Morocco punched their ticket to the next round after a dramatic penalty shootout against the Netherlands, which ended 3-2 after the teams remained deadlocked at 1-1 through extra time.

Moroccan goalkeeper Yassine Bounou became the hero of that match, delivering a crucial penalty save to help his team progress. As Canada prepares to take on Morocco in what promises to be a high-voltage contest, the entire nation is expected to remain glued to their screens, hoping to extend this historic campaign even further on home soil.

Oliver Kahn praises Messi and Ronaldo's rivalry

NEW DELHI

German football icon Oliver Kahn has paid tribute to the legendary rivalry between Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo. Speaking as part of the FIFA World Cup 2026 expert panel, Kahn described their nearly two-decade-long competition as a unique phenomenon that elevated the sport to heights that may never be seen again.

Kahn emphasized that the greatness of Messi and Ronaldo was defined by their actions rather than words. "Their rivalry was built on performances," he noted, explaining that the two superstars consistently pushed each other to improve every single season. Their rare combination of extreme talent, relentless consistency, and incredible longevity has set a benchmark for future generations of players.

While the duo has battled intensely at the club level, they have never faced each other in a World Cup match. With the 2026 tournament likely being the final stage for both, fans are still hoping to see one last epic encounter.

Kahn also reflected on his own legendary career, specifically his 2002 World Cup performance where he became the only goalkeeper to ever win the Golden Ball. Despite the immense honor, he admitted that the pain of losing the final persists, stating he would trade that personal award for a winner's trophy. Offering advice to young players, Kahn urged them to stop fearing pressure and instead embrace it. He reminded them that, on the world's biggest stage, staying focused for every single second is what determines a player's legacy.

Gakpo scores emotional tribute in WC

GUADALUPE

In a deeply poignant moment during Round of 32 clash, Dutch star Cody Gakpo delivered an emotional tribute following his opening goal against Morocco. Despite the recent tragic loss of his unborn child, Gakpo took the field and found the back of the net in the 72nd minute. Upon scoring, the forward bowed his head on the pitch before pointing toward the heavens in a moving memory of his son.

The strike was historically significant, marking Gakpo's sixth career goal in the FIFA World Cup. He now stands tied with Dutch icons including Dennis Bergkamp, Wesley Sneijder, and Robin van Persie, sitting just one goal behind all-time leader Johnny Rep. However, the Netherlands faced heartbreak on the scoreboard. While Gakpo's goal looked like a winner, Morocco responded in the 91st minute when Issa Diop soared to power home a dramatic header, forcing the match into extra time.

Japan striker Daizen Maeda apologizes after exit

HOUSTON

Following a heart-wrenching 2-1 defeat against Brazil in the World Cup Round of 32, Japanese striker Daizen Maeda has issued a sincere apology to his nation's fans. Despite a valiant effort that saw Japan take an early lead, a dramatic late goal from Gabriel Martinelli in the 95th minute ultimately ended their tournament journey, leaving players and supporters devastated.

The match began with promise for Japan, as Kaishu Sano stunned the five-time champions with a spectacular 40-yard solo run and goal in the 29th minute. However, Brazil surged back in the second half, with veteran Casemiro leveling the score before Martinelli's last-gasp strike secured the win for the South American giants.

Taking to social media platform, Maeda expressed deep regret for failing to advance past the round, acknowledging the high expectations held by supporters. "I'm truly sorry for not meeting your expectations," he wrote. Despite the disappointment, he highlighted the resilience of the team, noting that the collective effort built by the players, staff, and fans over the three and a half years since the 2022 Qatar tournament remains his greatest pride.

While Japan's quest for a deeper run ends here, the team's performance against one of the world's elite squads was marked by grit and tactical discipline. As Brazil moves forward to face either Ivory Coast or Norway, Maeda's message serves as a reflection of the deep bond between the squad and their loyal followers.

NEYMAR responds to viral WC prediction

TEXAS

Brazilian superstar Neymar proved he could impact the game even from the sidelines following Brazil's dramatic 2-1 comeback victory over Japan in the World Cup Round of 32. Shortly after the final whistle, the forward took to social media to aim a cheeky jab at German economist Joachim Klement, whose statistical model had famously predicted that Japan would eliminate the five-time champions.

Neymar's post, "Sr. Joachim Klement... favor tentar na proxima copa," which translates to "Mr. Joachim Klement... please try again at the next World Cup," quickly went viral. While the star did not play, he remained a key topic of discussion regarding team strategy. Head coach Carlo Ancelotti revealed post-match that he had specific plans for Neymar, noting, "I talked to Ney, if we don't draw, he'd come on at 60 minutes. Since we drew, I was preserving him for the 30 minutes of extra time."

The match itself was an instant classic. After falling behind to a brilliant solo goal from Kaishu Sano in the 29th minute, Brazil fought back through a Casemiro header in the 56th minute. The game appeared destined for the extra period Ancelotti was preparing for until Gabriel Martinelli struck a dramatic winner in the 95th minute.

WILLIAMS RULED OUT FOR AUSTRIA CLASH

NEW YORK

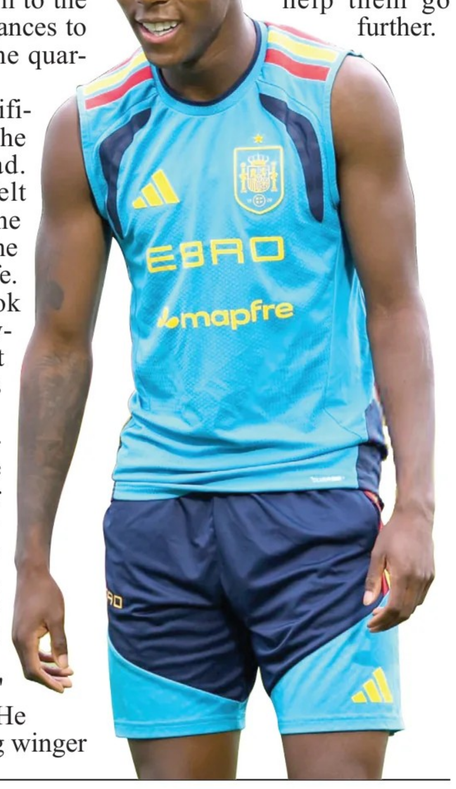
Spain has received a major boost regarding the fitness of star winger Nico Williams. Following a dangerous tackle from Uruguay's Nicolas de la Cruz during the last match, there were fears that Williams had suffered a tournament-ending groin tear. However, medical tests have confirmed the injury is not that severe.

While Williams will definitely miss Spain's upcoming round-of-32 clash against Austria on July 2, he remains in contention to return to the pitch if the team advances to the round of 16 or the quarter-finals.

The news is a significant relief for both the player and the squad. Williams initially felt devastated, calling the day after the match the "worst day" of his life. However, his outlook has improved following a heart-to-heart with head coach Luis de la Fuente.

Speaking to reporters, De la Fuente shared details of their conversation, focusing on the importance of mental resilience. "I spoke to him about perseverance, about overcoming problems and suffering," the coach explained. He encouraged the young winger to stay positive, noting that such setbacks are part of the journey for a top-level athlete.

This guidance seems to have worked wonders for the player's morale. According to the coach, Williams' attitude has shifted completely since their talk, and he is now focused on his recovery. As Spain prepares for their critical knockout match against Austria, the team will draw strength from the knowledge that their talented winger could return to help them go further.



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